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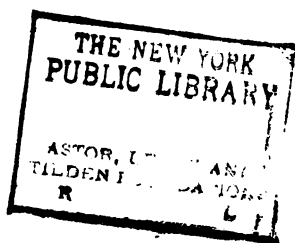
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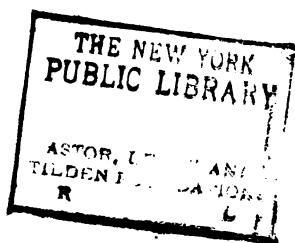


NAS
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Juvenile literature - Fiction, English

Re Xanthopoulos Question

pp 11-14



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"I think," she said, "that both mothers and little children would like to hear the story of a very dear babe,—the very best babe that ever was born on earth."

GUARDIAN ANGELS;

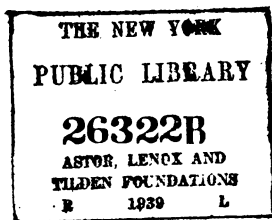
TALE OF PROGRESS.

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P R E F A C E .

THIS little volume is intended for the encouragement of those who are endeavouring to fulfil life's great end,—to glorify their God on earth, and to be rendered meet for His eternal kingdom. It is for those who are wishing, and for those who are striving; for the dwellers in the valley, who look wistfully on the hills above,—for the clamberers on the mountain side, who are going from strength to strength, trusting to appear before their God in Zion.

It is especially intended for the young, and the ardent, and the aspiring. We do not wish to chill any one's ardour, nor to check any one's aspirations. We wish them to go "higher and higher," even until there is no mountain beyond,—until they reach the aid that is above the clouds of earth, until they stand before the throne of God, and drink at the fountain-

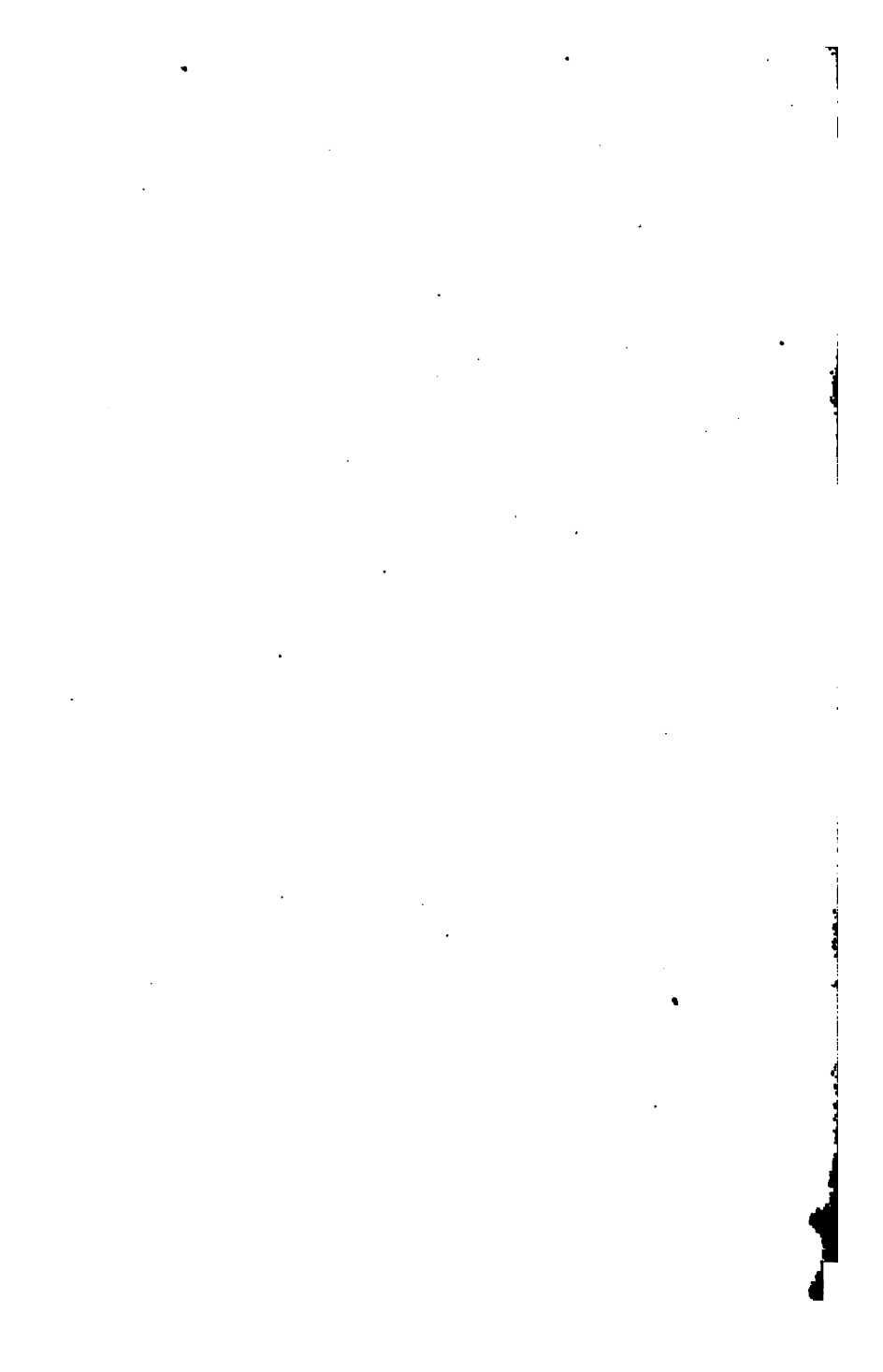
head of the pure river of life, whose waters, clear as crystal, flow in Heaven's Paradise.

The mount of duty up which the Christian must ascend is of tertiary formation. The primary rock is the Love of Christ; and that which lies directly on it, is Faith in His precious sacrifice. Then rise all the duties and graces which Scripture enjoins; "add to faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, charity." Love is the base, and love is the crowning peak; even as the primary granite, the foundation of God's mountain pyramids, is likewise the rock that forms the highest peaks, that overtops all the other layers, and points its naked summits towards the sky. Let the mountain clamberer's first step, therefore, be, to believe in the love of the Son of God; and as he clambers from ridge to ridge, as he surmounts duty after duty, still let his eye be on the highest point,—the preserving love of Jesus. And when the last step is taken, when the highest summit is reached, the Everlasting Arms, which have continually preserved him, shall bear him from the Pisgah of earth to the Canaan of heaven. Transforming grace shall then become transforming glory, and for progress from strength to strength, shall be substituted change from glory to glory.

We have reason to believe that they who highest climb earth's mount of duty, shall throughout eternity ascend higher heaven's mount of glory.

Arise, then, Christian! time is short, and the ascent is long. Gird thyself, and thou shalt attain. Onward! the path hath been trodden by thy Saviour. Upward! Jesus standeth at the right hand of God. With one hand He helpeth thee throughout the struggle, in the other He holdeth the purchased crown, with which He will reward thy toil.

In this simple tale of mountain-clamberers several true incidents are mingled. May God condescend to bless it all, for the furtherance of His honour, by permitting it to promote the good of His people, rousing some that rest in the valley, and quickening others, who linger in the ascent. Especially, may it lead the young to plant their footsteps on the mount of God—to strive in the days of youth—to clamber high—to “covet earnestly the best of gifts,”—and to “press toward the mark for the prize of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”



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O N W A R D .

CHAPTER I.

LOOKING UPWARDS.

"Higher, higher, let us climb,
Looking up and pressing on,
Hast'ning through the days of time,
Unto glory near the throne.
For all thy need
The Saviour cares,
So onward speed,
Thy pains he bears."

"Now, Ethie, won't you sing us something?" said Hubert, as seated at the little table, where his own lamp burned, he closed a volume on Nautical Science, which he had been diligently studying. "The clock is striking, so the young ones may shut their books also, and we must have something bright after the past hour of intense silence."

"Do, Ethie, do," said Gertrude; but poor Rowland looked up rather despairingly, as he exclaimed, "Oh! I had

just got hold of this problem, and now it is vanished quite. It is so troublesome ! ”

“ Never mind,” said his brother ; “ it will all come back to-morrow morning. You have been long enough at books now.”

“ That would do if I could master a thing, as easily as you can, but you know I can’t ; ” so Rowland took his books under one arm, and Hubert’s lamp in his hand, and ascended the stairs to his own little room, which he used to describe as “ placed alone upon the housetop.”

It was a slightly frosty night at the end of October. The youth wrapped his railway-rug round him, and in about twenty minutes the problem was solved.

“ Now I have done,” he said ; and he put out the lamp, and opened his skylight window to observe what stars were rising, setting, and culminating.

Rowland was of a quiet, plodding disposition. Though not quick in apprehension, he was deep in reflection. His temper was rarely excited by any disturbance ; but his feelings seldom expanded to enter into the pursuits of those with whom he associated. His maxim was, “ Let people alone ; ” and his entreaty was, “ Let me alone.” There was one, however, whom he loved with the strongest affection, in whose soul his own seemed to be enfolded, and that was the gentle, lovely Ethelda ; but for others, whether brother, sister, father, or school-fellows, he cared little. Ethie was his idol, and himself filled up the rest of his heart. He had a sense of religion, was upright and honourable, but

there was no room for the love of God to possess his soul. He was far from being thoroughly happy; and often wondered why he was so different to his beloved sister.

As he gazed at and noticed the stars that night, he almost mechanically began to repeat the stanzas of a baby rhyme, and without thinking of a word he uttered, proceeded to the commencement of the last verse:—

“As your bright and tiny spark
Lights the traveller in the dark;
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.”

Thought, then, suddenly arrested him. He mused as he repeated each of these lines; and looking once more at their tiny spark, exclaimed,—

“Happy, *useful* stars. Oh! that I were so also.”

Then shutting the window, he descended slowly to the drawing-room, where Ethelda and Hubert were singing duets.

Only Ethelda observed Rowland enter; and she soon noticed the rather sad expression of his countenance. The duet finished, she smiling brightly, turned to her younger brother,—

“Now, Rowly, what would you like?”

“Any thing, Ethie; you know *I* don’t care as long as you sing.”

“This is a favourite, is it not?” and her clear voice commenced Longfellow’s beautiful poem:—

"The shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed,
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with the strange device,
Excelsior! Excelsior!"

"Everybody likes that song," said the bright-eyed Gert-rude; "but I own it puzzles me. I do not like 'Excelsior,' because I don't understand it."

"I like you, Gerty, for always allowing what is true," replied Hubert. "We must ask Rowland for the explanation, since he evidently enjoys it."

"The story is simple enough," remarked Rowland, "both beautiful and true; for many are ever striving, and ever disappointed. They wave their 'Excelsior' banner, but in a little while the snow-wreath gathers round it." And then in an under-tone he added, "I have never unfurled mine yet."

"I am not sure of that, Rowly," said Ethelda, who had overheard him. "I have sometimes seen you bear it, but I own you have soon thrown it down."

"Without braving the awful avalanche," added Rowland, "'Excelsior' can never be my motto."

"A very dangerous one when climbing the mount of human glory, but it is the device which God hath bid us bear as we ascend towards the Heavenly City."

"I do not see why we may not hold it, and climb both mountains," remarked Hubert. "I hope to be a great man as well as a good man. Whatever I do, it must be 'higher! higher!'"

"Goodness is the higher mountain," said Ethelda; "so you should lose sight of Greatness; or, rather, they are one. Greatness is a volcanic hill when it stands alone; and if we reach its summit, it will open its mouth and swallow us up: but climb Goodness, and true Greatness lies at your feet."

"Well, Ethie," replied Hubert, "you seem to stand on the summit. Tell us how we are to attain ——"

"Hubert!"—and the tear filled Ethelda's eye—"I am far, far from reaching there."

"Oh, Ethie, I did not mean to distress you! I suppose it is because we are so deep in the valley that we fancied the point you had attained was the height of the mountain."

"You are all so metaphorical," said Gertrude, "that I can hardly understand you better than Longfellow; but if this is what you mean, I don't like it at all. Ethelda even thinks she is not good enough, and Hubert is always longing to be greater. We are never to be content and happy, and enjoy what we have, but to be always crying, 'Excelsior! Excelsior!' It may not sound so sentimental, but I do think that Longfellow's boy would have been wiser to have staid in the 'peaceful village' than to have been found half-buried in the snow."

✓"Very true of Longfellow's boy; but speaking of ourselves metaphorically, Gerty," replied Ethelda, "if we remain in the 'peaceful village' we must be overthrown by the avalanche of wrath. 'Excelsior' is the Christian's safety, for it is the command of our King; but He who bids his people 'Come up hither,' hath provided the needful

Guide, and promised the needful strength. Higher up, earth's mountain leads to the slippery glacier. Higher up, God's mountain leads to the Father's right hand, to the effulgence of glory. Let us not forget the two last beautiful lines,—

“And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior!”

“Do sing it again,” said Rowland thoughtfully; and as the beloved Ethelda's clear voice sounded “Excelsior!” her brothers joined, and it seemed no longer to them “the accents of an unknown tongue,” but rather the expression of a high resolve.

Rowland looked once more that night at the clear, shining stars; and they seemed to re-echo the word Ethelda had sung, and the wish again arose, “Oh! that my tiny spark might light the traveller in the dark!”

It was a high and holy desire, which should ere long spring from a far deeper and purer source than the present dissatisfied yearnings of his soul. The love of Christ should soon constrain it; and then it would lead him “Higher! higher!” until, having turned many souls unto righteousness, he should, in God's spiritual firmament, shine as the stars for ever and ever.

CHAPTER II.

COLIN AND JEANIE.

" Brother! would'st thou Jesus see,
And be blest by Him in time?
Blest, too, in eternity?
Brother, then, abide in Him.

Oh! abide in Him, my brother,
Give thy heart up to Him whole;
This one thing, without another,
Is sufficient for thy soul."

THE old family mansion in which the Alleynes lived did not stand far from the banks of one of those clear winding rivers that intersect our northern counties. These, running rapidly through deep dells, give birth to many beautiful spots in a country that might otherwise be deemed barren and uninviting. Mr. Alleyne's grounds had been laid out with excellent taste, Nature being allowed to continue her dominion, and Art being employed as her servant, rather than allowed to become her supplanter.

Through one of the narrow mossy walks that run nearly parallel with the river, Ethelda and Rowland were passing. The former had a small covered basket in her hand, whilst

Rowland carried a bundle beneath his arm. The day was not inviting; it was a sunless morning in the month of November. The moss was very damp, and the banks slippery, and innumerable rain-drops, which seemed as if they would never be dried up, were suspended from each branch, and from each brown leaf, that hung clingingly, but helplessly, to the newly-denuded branches.

Rowland walked very silently, and hardly replied at all to the remarks his sister made. These, consequently, became fewer and fewer, and at length the cawing of the crows seemed the only sound that disturbed that little woodland. And now they came to a green wicket-gate, passing through which they entered a field partly stubble, partly fallow-ground, in which the countryman with his plough and horses was busily engaged. On the other side stood a thatched cottage. Ethelda took the road that led to it, and as she knocked at the door, turning to Rowland, she inquired, "Now, Rowly, won't you go in?"

"I'd rather stay outside," he replied, in a dissatisfied tone.

"Very well," she said, somewhat sadly; but Rowland, finding it awkward to transfer the bundle from his arm to Ethelda's, said, with an effort, "I'll go in for once, if you like it."

His sister's countenance brightened, and she cheerfully entered the old man's home, accompanied by her young brother.

"Good morning, Colin; and how are you and Jeanie to-day?"

"I think we are some better, ma'am; thank ye, kindly."

"I hardly expected to hear that during this dull November weather; but you are looking more cheerful. We have brought some warm things, we thought might make you and Jeanie comfortable this winter."

"Oh, thank you, kindly. I'm sure we are much obliged;"—and Ethelda undid the parcel, and made blind Jeanie feel the warm stockings and other things that it contained. In the meantime Colin inquired of the young master whether he would not be seated, and moved his stiffened arms, as much as rheumatism would allow, to place one of the chairs in a more convenient situation. Rowland observing this, and feeling that after the poor man's trouble it would not be civil to refuse, sat down, wondering what he could say.

Colin said something about the dulness of the weather, and Rowland said, "Yes;" and then Colin hoped that the days might become brighter as the fogs of November cleared away, and Rowland said, "I hope so;" and then Colin was silent, and Rowland was silent also. Ethelda observing this, even whilst she was talking to Jeanie, immediately turned to the old man, and begged him to tell her brother of some of his adventures in early life.

"Well now, master, I'll tell you, if, maybe, ye'd like to hear. I was of a roving turn when quite young, so at

last I ran off from home and went to sea. I was always wishing I was what I wasn't, and always dreaming of making a fortune and coming back a great man. Twice I saved some pounds, and then I was both times wrecked. Indeed, master, I have found it doesn't do to be always running after the money. The last wreck told hard upon my health; we were nine days upon a raft, and were taken up more dead than alive. I do not remember the last of that; the senses were not left in me, when the ship rescued us. I was a regular wrecked man in health and fortune, so I wandered home. Father, he took me kindly in; but mother, I only saw the sod that was above her grave. Ah! that was sad to bear; and I never shall forget it, sir. A child of my brother's was on my knee, and he looks up at me and says, 'Did ye know granny?' I says, 'Yes, I am her son,' and the boy looks up and says, 'Are you the naughty laddie that ran away, and that granny used to pray for every night; and when she was dying she prayed the Lord Jesus, she might meet her poor Coll in heaven?' Ah! Master Rowland, that went through my heart like a dagger, for I loved mother! It was worse to bear than any shipwreck. Well, I never went to sea again, but I didn't get better. I now took to roving about the country, selling mugs and basins. I was married then, and I had several children. I was often before the magistrates as a vagrant, and I swore, and fought, and drank. Ah! I've

been a wicked one, and I cannot think why I wasn't cut off in my sins."

"Because Jesus has loved you, you cannot tell why," remarked Ethelda.

"Aye, ma'am, just so:" and the silent tear gathered in the old man's eye, and then ran slowly down the furrows of his aged cheek. "Well, Master Rowland, I fear I shall tire you; but I grew old in my sins. The children all were grown, but, except Jeanie here, cared little for me; and then the mother died. I dinna like to talk of her funeral; it was a sad disgrace. We went to the public-house after she was buried, and I and the lads were all o' us drunk. I wonder, we were not buried the next. But now I was eighty years old, and I could not go on with the wandering no more; so the parish allowed me and Jeanie five shillings, and one of my sons, who has got on well in the world, gives us three shillings a-week more, and so we took this cottage, and, thank God, I've come to live in it. Master Rowland, I did not believe the Bible, but I had been here some years; it is about three summers since your sister knocked at the door and asked if I had a Bible. I told her, 'No, I didn't need it, I could do well enough without it.' I dare say she was sorry to see an old man tottering to the grave, and no staff to lean on, for she did not take my rough answer, but talked so nice like, I could not help asking her to come to my poor cot once more;" and turning to Ethelda, the old man continued,—“And ye know, ma'am, how

ye've come again and again, and how ye answered all the objections I could bring forward; and now I find this precious Bible is just like the chart that tells the sailor when to go to windward or leeward, and will lead me right on to the port o' yonder."

"Then, Colin," said Ethelda, "you are still pressing forward, even in old age?"

"Aye, ma'am, the Golden City is still afore us. The mountain we are getting up reaches ahint the clouds. Jeanie and I often talk of the end, and I oft spell out to her the two last chapters of the Revelation."

"I oft tell father," remarked Jeanie, with that placid, happy look which so characterised her, "that I shall at first have the advantage of him; it will be such a surprise to my poor blind eyes to see all at once the King in His beauty, and the city which hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to lighten it."

"Ah, Jeanie, you see that even now by faith, and so even now you have the advantage over many."

"Yes, ma'am, yes, God has just covered me with advantages. I'm sure, I should never cease to thank the blessed Lord."

"Indeed we should not," added the old man, "because His mercy endureth for ever. I've now passed fourscore years and ten, and that mercy, which bore with me when I never knew it, may well be trusted during the few months of life that remain. I only pray that so long

as I live, I may live to the Lord, that as I get more near to heaven, I may get more like to it."

"Always onward," said Ethelda,—“onward to the Father's home."

"That is it, ma'am," and the old man looked bright, and so did Jeanie. Ethelda and Rowland wished them good morning, and soon closed the little wicket-gate, which led into their cottage-garden.

"Ethie," remarked Rowland, earnestly, as they retraced their steps, "I see that old man knows the meaning of 'Excelsior.'"

"Does he? What makes you think so?"

"Because he is a mountain-clamberer, and with true pilgrim spirit, will not lay down his staff, till—I liked the way he spoke—he is ahint the clouds."

"I wish," replied Ethelda, "we could all take up our staff in that way also."

"Oh! Ethie," said Rowland, with extreme earnestness, "I am very unhappy,—I want to be very good, and I cannot. I feel I am cross and selfish, and the more I feel it, the worse I seem to be. I go down instead of up,—lower rather than higher."

"Don't be unhappy, dear Rowly," replied his sister; "Paul died before he lived. He commenced the ascent from the moment that he fell to the ground, overcome by the bright light that shone from heaven."

"Yes; but he did then begin to ascend. I get lower and lower, I feel it."

"So low, dear boy, that no one but God can raise you up."

Rowland was silent; a ray of hope beamed suddenly over his sorrowful mind. He considered it with wonder, and his heart continued too full to allow him to speak. Ethelda did not know how God blessed that word so gently spoken. Seeing that her brother was no longer inclined to converse, she was silent. As soon as they reached home, Rowland hastened to his little skylight-room. He poured out the fulness of his heart upon his knees, and again and again supplicated, "Lord, no one but thyself can lift me up. Pity me for Jesus' sake, Amen." Gradually, the conviction of the power of God increased in his mind, and the doubt of his willingness seemed as gradually to remove, until he indeed hoped that God would fulfil to him the promise, "I will be your God forever and ever; I will be your Guide, even unto death."

CHAPTER III.

THE FAMILY AT ALLEYNE.

"Yet, if it be His holy will,
I pray that, hand in hand,
We all may travel many a hill
Of this the pilgrims' land.

With Zion's shining gate in view,
Through every danger rise;
And form a family anew,
Unbroken in the skies."

Not far from Alleyne stood the old parish church. Its ancient spire pointing towards heaven, seemed to tell at once the Christian's hope and duty. A many-graved churchyard surrounded that old edifice, and beside the wall which enclosed it, old elm-trees grew. Under the shadow of some of their branches there was a tomb of massive stone, which contrasted strongly with the little green hillocks and simple headstones, marking where the villagers had been laid to rest. A lamb, as it had been slain, was carved on one side, and below were inscribed the simple words, "I lay my sins on Jesus;" on the opposite side of the tomb were written

the names of Ethelda, the beloved wife of Hugh Alleyne, of Alleyne, and of Bertha, their infant child. "They are not, for God took them," were the only words the surviving husband had engraven there. The morning that Ethelda and Rowland walked to see old Colin, was the fourteenth anniversary of the sad day, when their valued mother had been consigned to her lonely tomb. It had been but a short week before, that in the morning there was great joy, for another little girl was born, and in the evening there was bitter weeping, because it was evident that the husband must part with the wife he so tenderly cherished, that the children must lose the mother they so fondly loved, and the servants cease to call her, mistress, whom they so highly regarded.

The dying mother had requested to see her little ones once more. She calmly kissed the fragile, new-born babe, and the bright-eyed Gertrude; but her eye filled with tears as her father placed his youngest boy on her pillow, and the thoughtful-looking Rowly, but half understanding the scene, buried his infant head on his dying parent's breast, and lisped, "Mamma, darling mamma, don't leave Rowly,—Rowly go too." The mother could not speak, but her lips moved in prayer, wafting, no doubt, a petition to the throne of God that the Heavenly Father would never leave her child. Hubert and Ethie also stood in that chamber of death, and Mrs. Alleyne for a moment looked sadly at her weeping children, who must so soon be deprived of a mother's care; but she knew in whom she believed, and doubted

not that her God would supply all their need. Her eye once more brightened, she laid her hand on theirs, and slowly said, "My children, ever—follow Jesus. Look up to Him." Then her thoughts seemed to pass to her absent first-born, for she was heard to whisper, "And Percy too." And now her last look rested on her broken-hearted husband, and she uttered, "Trust—trust." Her own trusting soul passed into the presence of her Saviour, and the others were left to mourn, but not as those who have no hope. The new-born Bertha survived her mother but a few hours, and then her infant lyre was tuned to swell that chorus of praise in which her parent had already united. From that time Mr. Alleyne was, indeed, bowed low with grief. His daughter Ethelda was the only one on earth from whom he appeared to receive comfort; and as she grew into womanhood, he loved to trace in her the lineaments of her mother. She strongly resembled her, not only in disposition and appearance, but in the strength of her faith and in devotedness to her God. The poor people, who had loved Mrs. Alleyne, declared that in Miss Ethelda they had their dear lady back again.

Percy, the eldest son, had sailed for India. He there filled an important civil office, had chosen for himself a wife, accomplished and beautiful, and was the father of one lovely child. Hubert was very clever, very ambitious, and very warm-hearted. He was the thorough English sailor. His frank, lively manner, his kindness of disposition, and his handsome, ingenuous countenance, won

him friends wherever he went. He admired the religion of Ethelda, because he knew that it was sincere; but he despised that of mere professors, because he hated its hollowness. Even from Ethelda's piety he shrank,—he did not like coming too near it; yet, although he felt that he had nothing in common with his sister's feelings, he could not find out how to quarrel with them, and his conscience was always whispering, "Ethelda is right, and you are wrong." Amidst the allurements of a treacherous world, with all its pomps and vanities, with all its honours and deceitful promises, Ethelda trembled for the soul of this brother, whom she dearly loved.

Gertrude's disposition, lively and open-hearted, somewhat resembled that of Hubert. She had not his ambition, his imagination, nor his talent, but they always had been very fond of each other; and whenever the young sailor had a few days or weeks to spend at home, he delighted to play with "little Gerty," to look at her innocent young face, and to build castles in the air, as to how they should some day live with each other.

From the time that their mother died, Ethelda had always felt that Rowland and Gertrude were her special charge; and though she was then but a child herself, they both loved her with that clinging, trustful affection that seldom falls but to a mother's share. Over Rowland she had the most influence; and though his disposition appeared the least promising, he was the first of the little circle of brothers and sisters who turned with her to walk in re-

ligion's ways, to climb the heights of the holy mount. It had long been decided that he should go through a University course, though it was yet undetermined, whether he should ultimately enter the law or the Church. For many years Ethelda's strong but secret wish had been that her brother might be chosen an ambassador of the Cross of Christ, that she might hear her beloved Rowland, with a voice that spoke the deep-felt utterance of the heart, proclaim salvation by Jesus only; and this petition had been so often laid in humble submission before the throne of grace, that Ethelda felt assured it would be answered by a God that heareth prayer. Mr. Alleyne left entirely, to each of his sons, the choice of their future life. He was one whose principles were far too high to influence a child to enter the ministry from any thoughts of worldly advantage. When he did speak on the subject, he seemed rather to lean towards the barrister's profession, because he felt that Rowland was not sufficiently under those sacred influences which he deemed all-essential to the ministry of the everlasting Gospel. It had been arranged that Rowland was to spend the time between school-days and college-days in travelling, partly to enlarge his mind, but principally to restore his health, as severe fagging at school was already beginning to weaken a delicate constitution.

December's days were growing very short, so short that Hubert thought a polar winter-night would be almost preferable, for then they would have the *Aurora Borealis* and the excitement of adventure. Hubert was likewise

becoming very expectant; he was longing for a fresh appointment. "Nothing to do" was unbearable to him. Rowland was looking much more cheerful, much less selfish; and one or two little things, which he had done, had made Gertrude say that he was "going to be just like Ethie." The postman had brought day after day the leathern bag, with the "Times" and with letters, but not the one for which Hubert longed. The chit-chat letters from aunts and cousins which his sisters received, or the more important ones directed to his father, were turned over by him nearly as carelessly as the many circulars concerning garden-seed, or table-beer, or music masters, or pianoforte-tuners.

However, a morning came at last when the sun shone rather more brightly than usual, and the murkiness of November, which appeared to have run into the following month, had somewhat cleared away. Hubert had discovered work to do in the garden, but at post-time he found himself very near the drawing-room window; and just as he tapped at it to inquire about letters, the servant knocked at the door and brought in the important bag. Gertrude opened the same. "For papa,—for papa,—for Ethie,—for Rowland,—for—" and then there was a mischievous appearance of being sorely puzzled, "for—Lieut. H. Alleyne, R. N.," and then she turned over the letter, and laughingly exclaimed, "Ah, it has an Admiralty seal too; but you must come round, this window is so stiff with the rain that nobody can open it."

"I never gave you credit, you old thing, for rheumatic

panes before," said Hubert, merrily addressing the window as he leaped over the flower-beds, that way being the nearest to the front door.

The envelope was quickly opened and flung aside, and the letter within was at once read aloud, so that Hubert and his sisters knew at the same moment the good tidings.

"So here is your brother, Lieutenant in Her Majesty's ship, 'The Harbinger.' Hip, hip, hurrah!" shouted the merry-hearted Hubert, "and it is bound for China; so I shall see half, if not all the world, before I am at home again."

"That is a long way," said Gertrude, tears of pure affection filling his sister's eyes. "I wish it had been at Spithead or Sheerness, and then you would have constantly been running down to pay us a visit."

"Sheerness, Gerty? no, no, thank you. Ho, ho, for the far East! I shall bring you home, Gerty, ladies' pinched-up shoes, and, if I could get it, a Chinaman's tail; and then I would get all the strange corals, and sea-weeds, and shells I could find for Rowland; and idols and joss-sticks, and extraordinary books and porcelain, for you, Ethie; and a mandarin's cloak for my father. Oh, it will be capital! And then we may have an opportunity of showing that I am brave, in beating those rascally pirates;—all steps to being Rajah of Paripâk, or Sir Hubert Alleyne, at some future day. What say you, Ethie?"

Ethelda looked at her brother's handsome, animated countenance. The eye which had been sparkling so bril-

liantly rested on her, and in a moment became more thoughtful. He saw that her cheek wore a smile and bore a tear at the same moment. She tried to speak, but there was something that seemed to choke her. "Ethie, darling, what is the matter? Haven't we been always wishing for this?"

"Yes, I know, Huie; I am very glad. It is quite the voyage you will like. And," as he came near and kissed his sister, she continued, "my own dearest brother, may a Father's outstretched hand bring you to our own shores once more in safety."

"Oh, yes, Ethie, three years will pass quickly away."

"But, you know," replied his sister, "we can't stand still as they go forward. 'Changes will surely come,' only if we trust in God, we need not fear to see them. My precious Hubert, seek first the kingdom of heaven. That is our noblest ambition."

"I know you are right, Ethie; and you know I mean both to be good and great. At least I shall try," added the young lieutenant, speaking for once with thought as well as determination; "but now I must go and tell my father the news;" and with an elastic step and upright mien the ardent youth hurried towards the library.

"Heavenly Father! be Thou my brother's Guide and Guard," prayed Ethelda; and He, who listens to each whispered petition, prepared to answer the sister's cry, and guided the blind in a way that he knew not, and guarded the careless one through dangers, of which he was not aware.

CHAPTER IV.

OFF! OFF! AND AWAY!

"Our times are in Thy hands,
O God, we wish them there:
Our life, our friends, our souls we leave
Entirely to Thy care."

THERE was but one thing concerning the new appointment that Hubert declared was provoking. He must be in town on the 24th of December, and consequently could not be at home on the following blessed day of family-gathering, the birthday of the Prince of Peace. Many Christmas-days had passed since he had stirred the "yule log," or partaken of the goose-pie and fadge, or decked with holly-leaves and berries the stag-antlers that adorned the hall. To forego all this, somewhat damped the pleasure of his ardent anticipations; and then he likewise began to think of the reality of what Ethelda and Gertrude had felt on first hearing of the appointment, that three years of hemispheric separation were long, and that many changes might take place whilst he was far away.

Hubert had a small morocco Bible, with a gold rim all round it, that had been given him by Ethelda, when first he started as a naval cadet. It had ever since been his constant companion, and though often he passed the day and tumbled into his berth at night without opening it, he had yet enjoyed, on Sunday especially, hours of study over the Sacred Volume, and valued it not only from early association, but likewise from some faint appreciation of the value of its contents. It was near midnight on the evening before he started, that Ethie, imagining her brother was in bed, gently opened his room door. She was surprised to see him sitting near the fire, bending over the gold-rimmed book. He hastily shut the volume, and seemed as if he wished to turn his face from her. The manly Hubert had been weeping, and his brilliant eyes were at that moment suffused with tears.

"I hope I don't disturb you, Huie. I thought, my boy, you had been in bed. I was only going to put this parcel into your carpet-bag."

"Let us see—what is it, Ethie?" he said, smiling as he spoke, and endeavouring to assume his usual careless manner.

"A little bit of Ethie's work to rival mandarin shoes."

"Why do you do such pretty sort of things?" said Hubert, examining the slippers. "How can I turn these heels down and tread your work under foot? They are very pretty, though; I like them very much, my old girl. Oh, Ethie, I wish I could take you all away with me, and

then I should be as happy as a king,—or rather, a great deal happier.”

Ethie bent down and fondly caressed her brother. The tears, which had been gathering in her eyes, now fairly ran down her cheeks, and quite in vain were all her efforts to speak. At length Hubert said gently, and rather cheerfully, “Come, Ethie, this won’t do. Sailors’ sisters must always make up their minds for parting with their brothers. I was reading a verse I liked very much just now, and I wanted you to tell me exactly what it means. This is it, Psalm lxxxiv. 7, ‘They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.’”

“Oh, Hubert! that is a beautiful verse. It speaks of grace now and of glory hereafter. It is the description of those who are clambering up the Mount of God. Now it is progress; hereafter, fruition of joy: now from strength to strength; hereafter, in the heavenly Zion, appearing before God—present with him, whom not having seen, we have loved.”

“It is not that, Ethie,” replied Hubert, sadly; “not, ~~we~~ have loved.”

“Whom we will love, then?”

“I dare not say that. You, dear girl, do not know how wicked I have been; and what must God think of it, when He chargeth even His angels with folly, and declares that even the heavens are not clean in His sight?”

“And,” added Ethelda, “knowing that we cannot help ourselves, He has laid help on One that is mighty,

and, knowing that our guilt is heinous, He has promised to wash crimson and scarlet sins until they are as white as snow."

Hubert did not reply to these solemnly spoken words, but he looked unusually thoughtful. As Ethelda once more kissed his brow, she said, "Let that verse in the Psalms be a constant subject for prayer between us; let us daily seek grace to go from strength to strength; and, darling Huie, if we do not meet on earth again, may it be on the summit of the Mount, in the presence of our Saviour God."

Early the following morning all the members of the household were astir. Hubert had partaken of a hasty breakfast, and the horses were ordered to the door in a quarter of an hour.

"Is the governor up?" he inquired of Ethelda, as she came out of the library.

"Our dear father is waiting to see you," she replied, in a tone that conveyed a mild reproof for the use of a word which, she often had told Hubert, was wholly devoid of affectionate regard.

Old Mr. Alleyne had risen earlier than usual to bid his sailor son, "farewell." He gathered together all his children, and knelt with them round the throne of grace, commending the young voyager to His care who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. His words were very few, but he said earnestly, "God bless you, Hubert;" and he tried to

hide his strong emotion as he added, "You'll write sometimes?"

"Often, I hope, dear father;" and Hubert inwardly resolved to give no more cause of anxiety to the beloved parent, who stood before him with hairs silvered by the progress of the last few years.

Soon the brothers were off to the station. The quick canter at which it was necessary that the horses should go, contributed to raise Hubert's spirits, and he already began to sing aloud,—

"The sea, the sea, the bright blue sea,
Where I would ever, ever be."

The railway whistle was heard as Jeannette reached the top of the hill, still two hundred yards from the station. She seemed to understand the necessity of speed, and galloped onwards. Rowland followed on "Dapple Grey." In a moment the reins were given to the servant in waiting. "Take care, George, of my beautiful Jeannette till I come back," said he, frankly shaking hands with the groom. "Goodby, old Rover; keep off from the engine. Where is the luggage? All right? Now I am in. Rowly, my boy, goodby. Companionship with my own thoughts here. Goodby, Rowly!" and the train was gone, and the light-hearted Hubert was off! off! and away!

There was an earnest need for prayer, and though he oft

forgot his high and holy privilege, there were beloved ones at home who interceded for their absent one; and those supplications which ascended as the mist of morning were to collect on high, until a Father's hand poured them down in showers of blessings, on the absent son, on the far-separated brother.

CHAPTER V.

ENDEAVOURING.

"Oft in danger, oft in woe,
Onward, Christian, onward go;
Bear the toil, maintain the strife,
Strengthened with the bread of life.

Onward, then, to glory move,
More than conquerors ye shall prove;
Though opposed by many a foe,
Christian soldiers, onward go."

QUIET but pleasant days passed at Alleyne after Hubert's departure. Every one missed the young sailor, but no one so much as Gertrude, whose bright young face wore a cloud that did not often overshadow it. This was, however, soon dissipated by an arrangement that her father made, for her to spend the winter in London, taking lessons of different masters in various branches of study and of art. Ethelda and Rowland were thus left for some weeks alone. They took sweet counsel together; they walked as friends, they urged one another to love and to good works, they grew together as fair trees in the vineyard which the Great Husbandman had planted.

Rowland's mornings were devoted to study, and each afternoon, he enjoyed either a walk or a ride with his beloved sister. Colin and Jeanie were often visited, and Rowland no longer found it difficult to discover something to say to the old man. Sometimes he would venture to go alone, and after he had listened to tales of the sea, and of wayside wanderings, he would hear the testimony that the aged believer bore to the faithfulness of his God.

"And now, master," one day said old Colin, "has not the Lord helped us hitherto? Surely, surely, we need not fear; nor need you, my young sir, if you do but trust Him, and look at Him straight. The Lord can bear a straight look, for He has nought to hide; and we need not fear it neither, for our robe has nae flaw. It's all the work of the Lord Jesus."

"But, Colin, I can't be satisfied with myself—I can't get on as I wish to do."

"Be satisfied with yourself, master! ye manna be that; but be satisfied with the Saviour, for ye canna have no better."

"I know that, Colin," said Rowland, very earnestly; "but though he can't be a better Saviour, I wish that I was a better servant."

"Aye, that's true, young master; and if ye say so, who are so early walking in the right path, much more reason have I, a poor auld grey-haired sinner." The tears filled old Colin's eye, and a look of great distress came over his countenance. At length a smile once more lit up his face,—

"But we manna look for sin; God says it is blotted out, altogether gone. We must just look up—up—and see the Lord; and looking up, we must clamber up. I think, sir, that is just the way."

Old Colin's words seemed as a sunbeam that pierced the shadow, which clouded Rowland's Christian course, and often when his soul was grieved on looking within, he remembered that the old man was comforted by looking up, and he likewise lifted up his head and beheld the Saviour.

The village of Alleyne consisted of houses joined one to another, and lacking the ornamental cottage gardens that usually form the chief beauty of an English village. There was no pavement in front of the houses, round grey stones supplied its place, and sloped from either side towards the macadamised road which passed through the centre. It was situated on a steep bank, which sloped from the beautiful castle that crowned its summit to the churchyard, of which we have already spoken, that occupied the lowest ground round which the river wound. Near the centre stood a low, white-washed cottage, with a thatched roof; a long frontage, a door with a well-worn flag beneath it, and three windows, the largest of very moderate size, and the smaller one hardly sufficient to hold the dusty geraniums which helped yet further to block up the light. The room which possessed that little window was occupied by Edward Arnold, a young man of prepossessing countenance, intelligent in his conversation, and industrious in his work. He was, moreover, an earnest Christian; experiencing the value of salvation, he

longed to make it known to others ; tasting that the Lord is gracious, he desired to tell of Jesus to all around. In the early morning, Edward would be studying his Bible, making memoranda of what he read, and praying to his heavenly Father to guide him through the trials of the opening day ; and Edward's kind words of sympathy and readiness to assist made him a village favourite ; and the boys were well pleased to be placed in his Sunday-school class. When his day's toil was over, Edward had, generally, an aged friend or a little child to instruct.

It was on Easter Monday that Ethelda and Rowland, with Mr. Graham and two of his little daughters, stood on the grassy bank below the castle, surrounded by many boys and girls, to whom they were distributing the variously-coloured paste eggs that filled their baskets. As each child received its gift, a look of pleasure lit up the eye, and the bow or the curtsy was made ; and then it was off to the bowling-green, where the hard-boiled eggs were rolled up the hill, and caught again in their descent, and whence peals of merry laughter were heard, as the broken shell fell in fragments, and the scattered yolk was either left for the feathered warblers, or gathered by the juvenile prattlers.

Rowland Alleyne had with him a large foot-ball to give to the boys of the National School. Hubert had usually presented it, with that easy, manly air, which won him the golden opinions of all the young ones around ; his own foot would give it the first stroke, and his own merry hurrah would be echoed by all the group. Rowland felt bashful,—

he twice or thrice essayed to go forwards, but it was in vain; a foolish timidity overcame him, and at last he begged of Mr. Graham to give it through Edward Arnold. The young man came forward, expressed the thanks of the boys; but, looking towards Rowland, he inquired, "But will not Mr. Rowland give it himself?" It was in vain. The youth, who was fearless under bodily danger, could not summon up courage to go forward amidst some forty or fifty merry boys; and, out of humour with himself, he urged Ethelda to leave the playground.

During his walk home, he seemed in one of his old, silent moods, thoroughly crusty in his replies to Ethelda's remarks. At last, with an effort, he said,—

"Now, Ethie, tell me what is the use of what we, or rather you, have been doing to-day; for as for me, I have made a fool of myself?"

"I think, Rowly, that by showing a ready sympathy with the young ones in their innocent recreations, we warm their hearts towards ourselves, and we all listen more readily to the teaching of those we love, than of those about whom we do not care. And then again, when, next Sunday, I talk with my little girls on the joys of heaven, I can illustrate the subject by the joys of this Monday's holiday, and contrast their littleness and shortness with the everlasting pleasures that are at God's right hand. I should not have thought of this, if I had not seen how very happy they were this afternoon."

"I was wishing to speak to Mr. Graham about a class in

the Sunday-school, but I couldn't. I think I could ask Edward Arnold best, only he saw what a fool I was; and I suppose the boys will think I don't care about their play, and will at once dislike me as a teacher."

"Oh, no, Rowly; you are vexing yourself far too much. I hardly know Edward Arnold, but I should like very much to have some conversation with him. We will walk down to the village to-morrow, and if he does not give himself a second holiday, we are sure to find him at his last."

"Very well, Ethie; but remember you speak for me."

"Indeed, I don't promise," his sister replied laughingly. "Yours is a barrier on Mount Utility, that must be overcome."

Tuesday came, and morning studies completed and luncheon finished, the brother and sister started for their walk to Alleyne. They stayed for a little while at a poor man's cottage upon the road. It was the first visit they had paid to its inmates, but Ethelda had heard the previous evening that a little girl there had been sadly scalded. No one replied to Ethelda's gentle knock, so, raising the latch, she sought to discover if there was any one at home.

On a little three-legged stool, crouching towards the fire, sat a poor, wan, stupefied-looking boy; his eye was large and his cheek was hollow, and the poor fellow was evidently in an advanced stage of consumption. He stared at the strangers. Ethelda approached him, and said,—“I heard that there was a little girl here who is very much scalded.”

“Aye, she's there;” and he pointed towards a box bed,

with its wooden shutters only sufficiently open for creeping in and out.

"Is she much hurt?"

"Aye, she's very sore."

"How did it happen?"

"Mother had lifted the yetling off the fire, and left it there," pointing to the middle of the room; "and she comes running along and tumbles in."

"Poor child!" said Ethelda, and turning towards the bed, she pushed the shutter gently back, and saw that the poor little thing had fallen asleep, with an expression of pain yet resting on its countenance. Having ascertained that the parish doctor had seen it, and had done for it the best he could, she turned to the poor boy and said, "You seem very ill, my boy?"

"Aye, I'm ill; but they say there's no cure for it."

"Then do you think you'll die?"

"I 'spose so."

"And do you hope to go to heaven?"

"I don't know; I hope it." But the lad did not look up; he rather seemed as if he was counting the stitches in the patched knee of his trousers.

"But, my poor boy, would you not like to know that when you leave this world you are going to a brighter? Do you know anything of Jesus?"

"Of Jesus Christ, ma'am? Aye, He's the Son of God."

"And He loved you, and cared for you, and died for you. You know how He was crucified?"

"Aye, I've read it. 'He was crucified, dead, and buried.'"

"Have you ever read in the Bible how he was nailed to the cross?"

"I don't think it. I never got so far on as the Bible."

"I think, then, my brother will read it to you." Rowland gave a ready assent, and the lad looked up gratefully, his countenance growing somewhat brighter. "But first," continued Ethelda, "I will tell you something about Jesus. He is, as you said, the holy Son of God; and he loves us all very much,—so much, that as He knew that we must be punished on account of our sins, He died, and thus was punished instead of us. All the time He lived, He was very good, and cured the blind, and lame, and sick people, and spoke kindly to the poor. He need not have died, for He might have come down from the cross; but then *we* should have been lost,—you, and I, and every one of us must have gone to hell. You know why we deserve to go to hell, don't you?"

"Why?—yes, ma'am."

"Can you tell me why, my boy?"

"Why? I don't think it just the now."

"If you had a bag of marbles, and another boy stole them, and the master found it out and punished the boy, would it be fair?"

"To be sure—he'd deserve it."

"And if your father brought in some money, and laid it

down there, and you took a penny of it, and he punished you, would that be right?"

"Yes; but I never stole nothing."

"That is right; but you have sometimes done wrong, told a lie, or quarrelled, or used bad words, or forgotten to pray."

The boy hung down his head and muttered, "Sometimes."

"And so have I," said Ethelda; "so we are both sinners, and God would do quite right to keep us out of heaven, if He had not so loved us that He punished Jesus in our place; and now, if we ask Him, He will open wide the gates of heaven for us, poor, sinful children. Now, Rowly, if you will read part of the 27th chapter of Matthew, we shall hear how Jesus died."

The poor sick boy listened attentively. When it was over he said, "Thank you; and will ye look in again?"

"Yes," said Ethelda, "that we will; but we don't know your name yet."

"Jamie Clark, and the little lass is Bessie."

"Very well, I shan't forget that. And will you pray these little words: 'O God, make me to love thee, for Jesus Christ's sake?'"

The boy repeated them after Ethelda. Then taking some oranges out of her bag, she said, "These will do for you and Bessie till I come again."

Poor Jamie put up his emaciated hand to pull the

forelock of his hair, and thus he made his rustic bow; and Ethelda and Rowland proceeded onwards on their way.

"Ethie," said Rowland, "do you think I could often go and see that poor boy, and perhaps talk with him?"

"Do, Rowly, and God will speed you."

A sunbeam had entered that dark cottage,—yea, more, a ray of its brightness had been shed on the poor dying youth's immortal soul; and it was a sunbeam from the throne of glory, which should shine more and more until lost in heaven's perfect day.

CHAPTER VI.

EDWARD ARNOLD.

"My times are in Thy hand,
Pale poverty or wealth,
Corroding care, or calm repose,
Spring's balmy breath, or winter's snows,
Sickness, or buoyant health—
Whate'er betide,
If God provide,
Tis for the best, I wish no lot beside."

THROUGH the aforesaid little geranium-flowered window, the faint glimmer of a candle might have been observed very early on that Tuesday morning. It was Edward at work—not, however, with his awl and his last, but with his books—a Greek Testament which, self-taught, he was now able with tolerable facility to peruse, and Parkhurst's Greek Lexicon, a second-hand copy of which he had once with his slender finances managed to purchase.

Edward had been a clever, industrious boy, always the first in his class at the village-school;—the boy of whom the kind-hearted master augured great things, because he felt that his pupil had even outstripped himself in the path of knowledge. When Edward was twelve years old

his father died, and his widowed mother was left with six young children. Of these he was the eldest.

"Mother, you look worse than ever to-day," said Edward, very tenderly to his parent, when he returned from school, the third day after his father's funeral.

"And it's no wonder," replied the poor woman, bursting into tears. "They say we must go to the workhouse."

"But we won't, mother! we can't—we mustn't;" and the boy stood still for a moment, till, finding the scalding tears course each other down his flushed face, he suddenly turned round, flung down his satchel of books, hurried towards the field, and there throwing himself on the ground, cried in bitter agony:

"My own mother go to the workhouse—my sisters, myself? No, no—never, never! But what can I do?—what shall I do? I am miserable. O God of the fatherless, pity thy poor wretched boy! I thought I'd get on with my schooling. My master has always said I'd be a gentleman some day—and now to go to the workhouse! Oh, no, no!" And again he raised his swollen eyes to heaven, and said, "O Lord, help us in this strait, and show me what I can do!"

The boy had lain for long on the damp grass in that field, when a word of consolation seemed whispered to his aching spirit, "Commit thy way unto the Lord, and He will bring it to pass." Rising up, he knelt beneath the old elm-tree, and implored of his God to undertake his cause, and

so to provide for his parent, that she might never be forced to enter the workhouse; but he could not yet add, "Thy will, O Lord, be done." Though he felt some relief from prayer, there was still the consciousness of a rebellious will; there was the striving of the heifer unaccustomed to the yoke. He had at length to hasten away, for it was the night of Mr. Graham's Bible-class. The subject, that had been recently commenced, was the life of Elisha; and on that evening the fourth chapter of the Second of Kings was the portion for study. The beautiful tale of God's multiplying the widow's oil, and thus providing for her and her fatherless boys, was read by Edward as if he had never observed it before. He laid hold of it by the hand of faith: he appropriated it as his own; his heart was comforted, and he resolved to *trust*. And then they read further; they read of the Shunammite's trial, of the blasting of her fondest hopes, of the withering of her fairest flower, and of the strong faith which enabled her to hear, amid the storm, the still small voice of her heavenly Father, and to reply, "It is well." As the pastor spoke of resignation to the will of God—even when it crosses our own will—even when it is pulling down our proud imaginations, and humbling us in the dust—Edward felt how different were his own sentiments, how rebellious was his own spirit. He could no longer think of any promise, which would assure him that his family were not to be sent to the dreaded workhouse. He heard his pastor say that all was well, because God would make all things, however sad at present, work for

His people's everlasting good. He listened to his illustrations of the dark and threatening cloud dispensing the life-giving shower, of the rolling billows floating the vessel to its destined haven; but consignment to the workhouse seemed to poor Edward rougher than the roughest billow, darker than the darkest cloud. As the young men left the class, Mr. Graham stopped Edward for a little while.

"How is your mother, my lad?"

"She's very down-hearted, sir, the night."

"I am very sorry for her," said Mr. Graham. "Try to tell her of the Shunammite's faith; and tell her, too, how God multiplied the widow's oil."

"But, sir, they say we must go to the workhouse. Do you think God can keep us from going there?"

"He *can*, Edward; for nothing is too hard for Him."

"Then, sir, do you think He will? May I tell mother so?"

"He will, my boy, if he sees that it will be for your good."

"But it cannot be for our good to go to that horrid place Oh, sir, and my father was so respectable!"

"Edward, what would you have said if you had been in Joseph's place, bound as a slave and taken far from home and kindred?"

The boy hung down his head. At length he looked up, and with an expression which showed that he felt he could only give one answer, he frankly replied, "I suppose, sir, I should just have said what I have now been doing."

"Yes, Edward, and so did Jacob. You remember he exclaimed, 'All these things are against me!' Perhaps your heavenly Father is preparing some great good for you. Tell your mother to trust the widow's God, and then she may believe that all is for the best; and tell her, too, for this may cheer her, we have been writing about your sister Ellen, and we hope to get her into the Orphan Institution at C——."

"Thank you, sir, thank you;" and Edward left Mr. Graham, with a will somewhat subdued, though not altogether submissive.

Edward passed through some years of bitter trial. The prayer so vehemently urged was granted. Neither the widow nor her children were forced to enter the work-house. Edward was apprenticed to a shoemaker in a neighbouring town, but he proved a hard task-master. He obliged Edward to do the work which, in his own usually intoxicated condition, he could not complete; and bitter were the persecutions the poor youth endured because he would not work on the Lord's day, and because it was discovered that in his little garret-room he read the holy word of God and other books. Often as he partook with his master's family of the bare pittance portioned out for him, and endured their reviling language, the thought of his heart was, "Henceforward do thou, O Lord, undertake for me, nor permit me again to choose the lot of my inheritance." And yet, though Edward was taken from his much-loved home, from every opportunity of study, from listening

to the ministration of one who fed his people with the bread of life, God was teaching him—He was leading him—He was guiding the blind by a way which then he knew not. Edward was taught, that to be a Christian was a nobler ambition than to be a gentleman; that to glorify God in his earthly calling was the chief end of man; that to be amongst the saints of the Most Holy, was a far higher aim than to be of those whom man calls great. He was satisfied to await God's time; he was content to be guided in his onward course by the right hand of his heavenly Father.

Before his apprenticeship was over, his poor mother, worn out in mind and body, had followed her husband to the grave; his two younger sisters had been cut off by fever; and of the three that remained, one was still in the Orphan Institution and two in service. Edward, therefore, returned to his native village, but not to his kindred; he seemed alone in the world, but he was not alone: he looked above, and his Father's eye ever watched him; he looked around, and brothers and sisters were everywhere beheld; and he determined to live for the good of man and for the glory of God. Intently fond of study, he redeemed for this purpose the early hours of morn; and when his day's work was over, he had either a class of untutored villagers, who for some reason did not attend the day-school, or met with other young men with whom he read God's sacred word. Edward, though young, and poor, and friendless, was using all his influence to the glory of God, and God honoured his faithful servant, and gave him many seals of his humble ministry.

Ethelda found Edward, as she had expected, busily engaged at his trade. At first he seemed rather embarrassed at the unexpected appearance of visitors, but, with the natural courtesy that he possessed, he begged of the lady to be seated, as she must be somewhat tired with her walk.

"We came to talk with you, Edward, about the boys' Sunday-school; how is it going on now?"

"Very well, indeed, ma'am, I am thankful to say; the boys are attending much more regularly, and I was only saying the other day, how uncommonly attentive they had been the last few Sundays."

"That's very good," said Ethelda; "and how are you off for teachers?"

"We just want one more, and then, I think, the school would be perfect. I mean," said he, as if he had been guilty of using an inappropriate word—"I mean, that our organisation would be complete."

"Could I be the teacher needed?" said Rowland, making an effort, and looking much more afraid of Edward, than the latter was of him.

"Would you, sir?" asked Edward, his countenance brightening. "I am sure we are very much obliged to you." And then he told him the kind of boys who wanted a teacher, and in a pleasant, unassuming manner, he sought to encourage the young gentleman. After a little conversation, Edward, with a good deal of embarrassment, inquired, "May I make bold to ask you, sir, the meaning of

a little Greek that sorely puzzled me this morning? I am not a Greek scholar, you know, sir; but I have just been trying to teach myself to read the Testament in the very language in which the holy apostles wrote it." And then, with a face crimsoned to the very roots of his hair, he asked leave to show what seemed to him a difficult passage.

Rowland was well pleased to explain it, and was much struck by the intelligence and amount of learning that Edward, in the most simple manner, manifested. He offered him the loan of several books, and begged that he would come up some day to Alleyne, and take what volumes he thought might be most useful.

"Ethie," said Rowland, as they were returning home, "I do not think that young man should be making shoes all day. Could we not do something to give him a higher employment? I wish he could go to college."

"I am not sure that *that* would do him good; but I do agree, partly, with what you have said. I could not help thinking, whilst we were talking to him, that he might be very useful as a Scripture-reader in the parish; or, I was imagining the other day, how very much good a serious man might do, going about the country as a *colporteur* of Bibles and of good books."

"Colporteur! Ethie, what do you mean by that outlandish word?"

"That is the name which is given on the Continent to what we would call in English phrase, book-peddlers. The Bible-colporteurs have done great good in France and Bel-

gium, and many other countries; and I do not see why they might not be much blessed in England. In many a distant, country village, and on many a single farmstead or lonely cottage, a good book would be willingly purchased, and in not a few, the well-printed Bible would, to say the least, be a welcome boon."

"I do think that is a capital idea. Let me see, what could I do to further it?"

"A great deal, Rowly. First, you must consult our father and Mr. Graham about it; for, you know, before we propose to Edward to give up his trade, we must find him some other subsistence. Then there will be the secretaries of different societies to write to, for a supply of books—a license to procure—routes to fix with Edward, &c., &c."

"But, Ethie, you will help me?"

"Yes, *if* necessary. But I think, Rowly, it is just the very thing in which you will delight; and it does not seem beset with many difficulties—an inviting piece of hill-clambering."

"Yes; I quite like the thought of it, and," he added, with an earnest expression of countenance, "I do hope God will help us."

"I hope so, Rowly. The first step of our clambering must be with prayer, and then we may expect the light of God's countenance the rest of the way."

They had reached Alleyne, and young Rowland entered the house with a bright and sanguine eye. He had forgotten himself in the thought of others. He felt the happiness

of the conscious striving to do good. He had climbed a few steps of the mountain ascent, and was now full of hope for the future, and enjoyment of the present. His heavenly Father shall speed his blessed and noble path, and Rowland shall experience that not only are there pleasures at God's right hand for evermore, but that the road thither is the only way where true peace and happiness can be found, the only path of joyful progress, and of triumphant termination.

you

CHAPTER VII.

POOR, YET NOBLE.

"Adorn'd with glory from on high,
Salvation shines upon his face;
His robe is of th' ethereal dye,
His steps are dignity and grace.

Inferior honours he disdains,
Nor stoops to take applause from earth;
The King of Kings Himself maintains
Th' expenses of his heavenly birth."

On that evening, four neighbouring gentlemen dined at Alleyne. There was Mr. Graham, the excellent vicar, and Mr. Taylor, the village doctor, Sir Claude Wentworth, and Captain Fitzpayne, whose estates lay contiguously.

"I thought I saw you, Miss Alleyne, upon the Castle-lawn yesterday," said Mr. Taylor, with a deferential bow. "I imagined the juvenile party were greatly delighting in their Paschal gambols."

"Oh, yes," replied Ethelda, smiling, "they were a very merry, joyous party. Do you know," continued she, turning to Captain Fitzpayne, "of our old Northumbrian Easter customs?"

"Do you mean what I hear called 'paste-eggs?' I never heard of them till I was in Ancaster yesterday. I was riding across the bridge, which has the stone lion on it, when I observed the whole of the large meadow opposite to the castle covered with groups of children and others in holiday attire. I inquired of a countryman passing, the reason, and in his broad, rich dialect, he replied, 'Ah, it's a' for the young folks. They've a custom—I've kenned it ever since I was a boy, and long afore me—of going there on the Easter Monday to bowl the eggs; and they're his lordship and her ladyship gone among them themselfs, and givin' basketfuls away.' I watched the scene for a little while, and felt how truly all classes can appreciate kindness in little things; and I rode off thankful that there were places where the rich and poor could meet, and mutually render each other happy."

"Do you consider, however," inquired Mr. Taylor, "that the inferior grades of the community are sensible, generally, of such condescension on our part?"

"I cannot answer for your north-countrymen," said Captain Fitzpayne; "I have been for so short a time a resident among them: but in other parts of the world my experience has been almost uniform. What do you say, Sir Claude?"

"Really," replied the young baronet, ingenuously, "I cannot speak on the subject. I never thought about it. Condescending kindness on my part has, I must acknowl-

edge, been more shown to my dogs and horses than to my own species."

"And if my experience be correct," replied the doctor, "more gratitude would be manifested by the brute creation, than by the inferior members of the human family."

"You cannot mean," said Ethelda, warmly, "that the poor, and the inferior members of the human family, are eynonyms?"

"There are exceptions, Miss Alleyne, to every rule; I was only expressing myself on general principles."

"Then you must allow me wholly to dissent from such general principles. A better coat does not make a better heart."

"Quite right, Ethelda," said old Mr. Alleyne, pleased with his daughter's animated and energetic manner, on a subject so near his own heart. "There is many a noble feeling under maybe a ragged coat, and many an intelligent brain under a battered hat."

"And," added Mr. Graham, "there are many poor of this world, whom God hath chosen rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom."

"There may be much truth in those remarks," continued Mr. Taylor, with increased consequentiality, "but, professionally, I have seen phases in the life of the labouring classes which Miss Alleyne, I'll engage to say, has never witnessed; and more consummate ingratitude, unmanliness, and want of every finer feeling, could not be imagined."

"Perhaps you can give instances," observed Sir Claude.

"I confess myself wholly an ignoramus, and I wish to form a just opinion, but it must be based on facts. These are the stubborn things in the Englishman's mind."

"Selection from such numberless instances is a difficulty. As for ingratitude, I may say it is universal. The commonalty of England are incapable of appreciating genuine benevolence. You demand facts. One instance is presented just now very vividly to my imagination."

"Pardon me, doctor," interrupted Sir Claude; "I was calling upon your memory, not your imagination."

"Only a *lapsus linguæ*, Sir Claude," continued Mr. Taylor, rather discomposed. "My memory recalls the following incident. It was approaching six o'clock, one morning in midwinter, that a man came up to my house. It was a tempestuous morning—a snow-fall had occurred the previous evening, and though stars did manifest themselves occasionally in the interstices of the clouds, it was, as you will comprehend, a very frigid light. I arose. His wife was suffering from an acute attack of pneumonia. As I was going along—after, mind, I had left all the warm comforts of enveloped bedclothes—the man said, 'I was almost, sir, afraid to come, for I don't know if we shall ever be able to pay you; but the parish doctor was away five miles off, and my wife is so ill, I fear she may die.' The fellow was in great distress, so, after some hesitation, I still continued riding on. I saw the woman; she was in a very critical state. I used, of course, the proper remedies, and the disease presented favorable symptoms. The man began

thanking me, and talking much of his gratitude, and then he said, 'And you'll come back again, sir?' Now, this was too much. 'No,' said I, 'you must go to the parish-doctor now; he is there for people such as you.' Then, if you had seen the man's insolent bearing, and heard his iniquitous language, you would not have said much more for the gratitude and finer feelings of the poor."

"Is the man you speak of Ned Pringle?" asked Mr. Graham.

"The exact person. I can believe you have often marked his vulgarity."

"I can tell a story of the very same man," said Mr. Graham; "I remember his wife's illness well; poor fellow! he took it much to heart. Mrs. Graham and I often went to see her, and we always had a welcome from either of them. The poor woman recovered. One morning, when we were at breakfast, the servant came in with a large basketful of blackberries. 'Please, sir, Ned Pringle's children have brought these for the young ladies. They were the best they could get.' I suppose they were a return, (and was it not a rich one?) for the strawberries my Mary and Isa had taken her in summer."

"Those are two facts on which I must form my own conclusions," observed Sir Claude. "Perhaps Miss Alleyne will tell us something in favour of the clients, whom she has so warmly defended."

Ethelda cheerfully complied. She told the simple tale of Edward Arnold's efforts among those, who were poor like

himself; and then, deeming the opportunity somewhat auspicious, she mentioned the plan of the colportage of Bibles and good books. The proposal met not only with approbation, but with furtherance. Sufficient funds were at once provided, and the business was left in Rowland's hands.

"Would you tell me where young Arnold lives?" said Sir Claude, addressing Ethelda. "I should like to see a young man of that sort; for, till now, I have always doubted their reality."

Ethelda described his house, but Rowland said, "I believe, Sir Claude, he will be here to-night. So, if you wish it, you can have the opportunity of seeing him at once."

Sir Claude was naturally of a generous, noble spirit, but he had been brought up regardless of God, and thoughtless of his fellow-man. His father was a practical, if not an avowed infidel, and his only son had received an education in which the Bible held no place. Convinced of the existence of a Deity, he denied the existence of a Divine revelation, and placed the God, whom he had formed for himself, at the tribunal of human reason. He rested not in his vague unbelief. He sought a substance, but he found that he only grasped a shadow. He followed the bright light of his imagination, but, like the *ignis fatuus* of the marsh, it eluded his pursuit. He hovered over the waters of human philosophies; but, like the dove from the ark, he found no rest even for the sole

of his foot. Though outwardly gay, and reckoned one of overflowing spirits, he was really weary and heavy-laden; and yet he was too proud to hear the voice of Jesus of Nazareth, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Ethelda had retired to the drawing-room, when a young man, wishing to speak to Mr. Rowland, was announced, and he and Sir Claude were soon in the library, engaged in conversation with Edward Arnold.

After Rowland had lent the promised books, he told Edward of the plan of the colporteur, saying, "I fear at first it may not be so profitable as the shoemaking trade, and at any rate will be more uncertain, but you would be helping in a good cause."

"In the very best of causes. I cannot tell you, master, how pleased I am;" and the tears filled his honest eyes. "I only wonder I should ever have been chosen to be a candlestick, however humble, to hold forth the Light of life."

"Now, my good fellow," said Sir Claude, "is it the Bible you mean by that expression?"

"Yes, sir, no doubt," replied the young man, almost offended by such an inquiry.

"Then why do you call it the Light of life? I am asking for my own sake; for, either fortunately or unfortunately, I don't believe that the Bible is true."

Edward's countenance, which at first rather expressed, "Why should I be catechised in schoolboy-fashion?" wholly changed. Whilst it now wore the expression of the

deepest earnestness, there was likewise a look of indignation, as if something very dear had been assailed.

"I call the Bible the Light of life, sir, just because I know it is so; for it has lightened my own soul, and taught me to see two wonderful things."

"What may they be, Arnold?" inquired Sir Claude.

"The first was my own lost and helpless state. I knew always that I was a sinner, but I thought I could help myself, till I read what Paul said about his own righteousness; and then the second thing I learned was, that the Lord is my righteousness, and thus help is laid for me upon One that's mighty."

"Very good; you've heard what you think very good news. But how do you know it is true?"

"They're many ways showing that, which Paley and others can do better than I can. But I *know* it's true; something within me answers to every word of it. I've not, sir, been accustomed to much logic, but I should not require a proof the sun was shining, if I saw it."

"But how would you convince a third person, who denied it?"

"I suppose, sir, I couldn't convince him at all; but, if it were possible, I'd get an oculist to open his eyes, and he would see. Pardon me, sir, if I'm too bold; but, if you want to see, ask of the Lord God, and He will open your eyes, and you'll never doubt any more."

"Of one thing, Edward, I am quite sure—the Bible can do no harm; and I for one would gladly have all the

people read it. But do you think the poor can generally appreciate such a book?"

"Oh! sir, did not our blessed Saviour say, 'Unto the poor the Gospel is preached?' It is our own book, sir; it tells us that the Lord careth for the poor. I was going to say, we should do worse than you without it; but, excuse me, sir, a rich man drowning would need the helping hand, just the same as the poor."

"But what makes you so assured that the Bible is the word of God?"

"We know, sir, man can't read the heart, but we may well imagine, He who formed it knows what's in it. The Bible tells all that's in mine. The Bible told me the very thing I was wanting; it told me how I could get it, and how I should then feel. I tried it, and I felt just as the holy word of God said. Sir, truly the writing on the fleshly tables of the heart, and the writing in that precious book, are by the same author, and He is God."

"Then has the Bible made you happy?"

"Most truly. It showed me how I could be justified by faith, and now I've peace with God."

Edward said these words most solemnly, most heartily.

The baronet replied, "Thank you, Edward, for what you've said; I shall think of it, and let one of your first colporteur expeditions be to Laverock Priory, and we will have another lecture on the subject."

In the course of the evening Sir Claude said to Ethelda, "I have seen your *friend* Arnold, and I think he deserves that appellation."

"And did you like him?" Ethelda inquired.

"He at once secured a high place in my good books, though I am afraid I was put down very low in his bad ones."

"Oh! no; Edward would never think little of any one anxious to circulate God's holy word."

Sir Claude coloured; he felt that in subscribing liberally for the colporteur, he had led Ethelda to regard him almost as an earnest Christian. To appear under false colours was what his ingenuous soul abhorred. With an effort he replied,—

"Miss Alleyne, what would I give if, with Edward Arnold, I knew and believed that it was God's word!"

Ethelda was startled. She had not any idea of the sceptical opinions of Sir Claude. Her heart was filled with pity, as she saw the real sadness of heart of one who always seemed so thoughtless and volatile, and she replied earnestly,—

"Faith is the gift of God. You must ask of Him who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

Sir Claude returned home by moonlight late that evening. He did not urge forward his beautiful horse, as was his wont. He watched the moon's reflection in the clear waters of the winding river, and he thought of Edward

Arnold's assurance, that thus the lamp of life illuminated his heart, that because he felt its reflection he knew that it shone. A prayer arose from his lips, not in the words, but in the spirit of the Psalmist of old, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

CHAPTER VIII.

LITTLE HARRY.

"O child! O new-born denizen
 Of life's great city! On thy head
 The glory of the morn is shed,
 Like a celestial benison!
 Here at the portal thou dost stand,
 And with thy little hand
 Thou openest the mysterious gate
 Into the future's undiscovered land."

LONGFELLOW.

"DEAR father," said Ethelda, as, a few mornings after, she entered the library with the contents of the post-bag in her hand, "here are two foreign letters,—one, a ship one, from our Hubert, and the other from Percy. Do let me read them to you."

Old Mr. Alleyne at once pushed away his papers, and wiped his spectacles, as he said, "No, no, I must see them myself;" and he broke Hubert's seal with a trembling hand, or, more properly, tore open its gummed envelope. He commenced reading,—

"H. M. S. Harbinger.

Lat. 3° S. Long.

"I can't make it out. Here, young eyes will do better than mine, Ethie. I will read it afterwards, when I'm by

myself." And the sister, who had been standing with rather impatient feelings, gladly took the letter, to read the tidings of her sailor brother. There was much of the breeze, but nothing of the battle; much for enjoyment, nothing for complaint; two storms, and all the better; no calms, and therefore most fortunate; and yet, notwithstanding the thoughtless tone of that letter, there was an undercurrent of deep and solemn feeling.

"We landed at St. Helena. I saw Napoleon's grave, the staff of his 'Excelsior' banner broken in the ascent of the mount of 'Human Greatness.' What would I give to hear Ethie sing 'Excelsior,' and listen to her sage remarks! How is Rowly getting on? I am determined to be a first-rate sailor, and am studying and practising hard, but I doubt that I shall ever have an opportunity of showing it off. The chaplain and I are very good friends. I never heard anything so solemn as the thanksgiving after a storm. The men seemed all to feel—we could not help it—that it is God who rideth on the wings of the wind. I've often thought, that was a fine expression, but it requires a tropical storm quite to appreciate it. How is my little Gerty? I often wish I had her here, to watch the bright blue waves, always sparkling like her dear blue eyes. Tell Ethie I have come to the conclusion there is no animal in creation more happy than the sea-gull,—diving, floating, flying, at home in the deep blue ocean or on the crested surface of the wave, or on the heights of the dizziest rock. Were I not a man I should envy the sea-gull. May I never write, be-

cause a man with living soul, I therefore envy the soulless bird. How is Ethie's 'Billy?' I have a little Dick in my cabin, and its song always brings me back to that jolly, old land of ours,—dear, dear, old England." And then there were messages to at least half of the household, and after a promise of the next letter to Ethelda, this was concluded: "I hope, dear father, never to give you another hour's uneasiness, but trust that you may yet have reason to be proud of your old sailor-boy,

"HUBERT."

"Read that last part over again, Ethie," said the old man, blowing his nose, to hide the emotion that he felt. Ethelda complied, and her father remarked, "God grant that I may be thankful, not proud, for such a son!" Then, after a few moments' silence, "But didn't you say there was a letter from Percy?"

This, likewise, was read with deep interest. It told of the alarming illness of his precious little Harry; of the necessity which was laid on his parents, immediately to part with him; of an opportunity that offered for him to leave by the steamer, that would convey the present letter, and requested that some one might meet the dear child at Southampton to take him to Alleynes, where it had long been arranged, that, if spared, his boyhood should be passed.

"Our hearts are almost breaking," wrote Percy, "to part with our loved and lovely child; but we thought lately he was being called to a country, whence he could never re-

turn to us. Our Father has spared him yet a little while ; but He has taught us the frailty of our tender plant. We needed the lesson : for our hearts were too much bound up in our child. Now my anxious wish is that our darling should be trained for heaven. I know Ethelda will be as a mother to the temporary orphan ; that she will endeavour to lead Harry to love his Saviour ; and to her charge we commit the most precious earthen treasure that God has given us. The Good Shepherd of the sheep careth for His little lamb ; and if we see not our darling again on earth, I trust we may all be folded together above : one fold, one flock, one Shepherd."

It was a long letter ; and Ethelda read it with deep and mingled feelings. She loved the little Harry for her brother's sake. She loved him because of his own helplessness. She knew the responsibility and the anxiety that the care of him would entail ; but with woman's self-devotion she rejoiced to think of the service she could render the little one, and at once expressed her resolution,—

"I must go up, dear father, without delay, to Southampton. The mail is expected on the 27th, and this is the 22d."

"You, Ethie ! alone ?"

"Not quite. I will take Thompson with me, and I dare say Uncle Seymour, or one of my cousins, will run down with me to Southampton. You see, dear father, a little boy not five years old requires a lady's care, and the lady who, Percy says, has so kindly promised to look after him and his

bearer, does not come up to London, but at once branches off to Exeter."

"Would not your aunt go down?"

"I don't know. Do let me, dear father. Percy says he gives his little Harry into my charge, and I shall feel responsible from the day of his arrival in England."

"Then, Ethie, go, and may God bless you. But don't be foolish about the child, and don't love it too much."

Ethie smiled through her tears. A little while, and she was kneeling beside her bed, imploring that her Father in heaven would teach her in this new responsibility, that He would write the little one an heir of heaven, and would Himself train it for its high and holy destiny.

Light had not dawned on the morning of the 27th, when the gigantic Oriental, with its Eastern freight, entered the Southampton river. It was not, however, a silent hour on board the many-peopled vessel; all seemed astir; all were rejoicing on breathing again the fresh, cool air of an English April morning. The voices of many children might have been heard. Some were crying, some were shouting in English, some were chattering in Hindoostanee, some were looking vacantly around, wondering what was meant by this unusual disturbance. In one of the smallest berths lay a fair, delicate, pale-faced boy, watched over by a faithful Indian bearer. This child was he whom Ethie had come to seek, and the vessel had been a very short time moored when she likewise stood beside the dark-coloured attendant. The little one looked very fragile and very lovely. On his

placid brow clustered his wavy auburn hair; his closed eyelids were fringed with long dark eyelashes, which contrasted with the whiteness of the skin; his dear little mouth, with its ruby lips, wore an expression of intense calmness. Ethie stood there for some minutes, praying inwardly for her new and precious charge. She then stooped down and kissed the child's fair forehead; and as the little one opened his large, soft, blue eyes, and as the colour rushed into his cheeks on the sight of a stranger, Ethelda thought the little Harry the very picture of infant beauty, and she loved her brother's child with an increasingly ardent affection. Boosa soon dressed the little fellow, who before long was on friendly terms with his Aunt Ethelda. His cheeks had become pale again; and Ethie trembled as she observed his evident weakness.

"Does Harry pray to the great God?" said Ethelda, so soon as the child was ready dressed.

"Yes, auntie, Harry does; but Boosa, dear Boosa, doesn't, and sometimes Harry forgets."

The little boy knelt at the corner of the berth, and repeated rapidly, "Great God, make me a good boy. Bless papa, mamma, and everybody," and then the child said more slowly, "Bless Boosa, and make him good man for Jesus Christ's sake," and then the Lord's Prayer and the blessing were said in one, and all in railroad pace.

Harry and Boosa were strongly attached to each other, and both begged with tears that they might not be parted.

"I do love Boosa so very much, auntie," said the little

boy, one day when in London ; " I love him better than anybody, and I know he loves me."

" But Boosa will wish to go home again to his father, and mother, and brothers."

" No, auntie ; Boosa says, he loves me better than all. Auntie dear, we mustn't let Boosa go back."

" Why, darling ? "

" Harry couldn't do without dear Boosa. And perhaps Boosa would die."

" But God can take care of him."

" But Boosa doesn't pray to God. He prays to idols, wooden dolls. I sometimes tell him not. I say, ' Boosa, those things can't hear you.' He says, ' Master Harry, these be my gods.' And one day I got into a passion with him, and I take his god and throw it down, down on the floor, and it broke. Boosa was very angry ; but I said, ' Boosa, that can't be God, when it lets a little boy break it.' Boosa cried, and put his hands together, so that at last I cry too."

" Then what did Boosa say ? "

" Oh ! Boosa never like to see me cry, so he says, ' Never mind, master, I mend it soon ; ' but you know, auntie, how can that be a God which I can break, and which Boosa can mend ? "

" Of course it cannot, darling."

" But then if Boosa goes back to India," continued the little fellow, with increased earnestness, " he will always be

praying to those foolish things; but if he stays with us, I think, he will some day love our God."

"I trust so, Harry, but we can't change his heart."

"But we can teach him, auntie."

"Yes, and pray for him."

"I do, auntie; indeed I do. I often ask God to make dear Boosa put away all his ugly idols."

"Then, Harry, if he goes with us to Alleyne, you must still teach him, and try and be a gentle boy; speak kindly to Boosa, and do not get angry, as I heard you this morning."

Harry rather hung down his head, but soon raising it again, he replied, "But, auntie, I did not strike him; and it was really so provoking for him not to put sugar on my bread and butter."

"I hope Harry would never strike Boosa."

"Not very often," said the child, colouring. "Only when he vexes me."

"Harry, when Jesus was a little boy, He was very gentle, and his little children must try to be gentle also. Boosa will not think that Jesus is kind, unless you are so too."

"Then I will try, auntie; but it is so difficult."

"Yes, darling, very difficult; but ask God, and He will help you."

Then Ethelda and the little Harry knelt down together, and prayed that poor Boosa might learn to love the name of

Jesus, and that the kind Saviour would change little Harry's heart, and make him meek and mild.

And thus the infant boy, supplicating strength from on high, was enrolling himself a mountain clamberer, and his little feet were being made ready for the difficult ascent.

CHAPTER IX.

POOR JAMIE CLARK.

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto Me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast.
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad."

DURING the fortnight of Ethelda's absence, Rowland found his time fully occupied. It is true, Mrs. Crowe was very indefatigable in supplying the persons on the list that her young mistress had left with all the needful things that the culinary department could furnish. There was often the plateful of meat for old Colin and blind Jeanie, or the pudding for poor Jamie Clark, or the "sup broth" for his suffering little sister, besides sundry little delicacies or necessities for the cottagers around, according as might be required. Rowland had, however, learnt to visit, and to care for the poor. He now knew, that the daily portion from the hall was of little comparative benefit, either to giver or receiver, unless accompanied with personal inquiries.

Likewise, he had learnt to think of the wants of others; to consider before he left home what was needed, or what was likely to be welcome to the inhabitants of the special cottage he wished to visit; and thoughtful love had so grown upon him, that some of his complimentary friends declared that, "Master Rowland was just like a woman, in the way that he understood what would please them." He would go himself into the garden to gather violets for blind Jeanie; whilst for the less refined taste of Jamie Clark he would select, from the vase of drawing-room flowers, the most showy geraniums and lilies. Sometimes he made mistakes, as when, for Thomas Nesbit, just recovering from fever, he put into his pocket an early cucumber, which his mother boiled, and meshed it as if it had been a turnip; or when he sent a bunch of young rhubarb to a family that were ill from the effects of indulging in unripe gooseberries. Usually, however, Rowland was successful, and his father remarked with pleasure the increased brightness of his boy's countenance. The old man had not penetrated through Rowland's reserve, and discovered that he had begun a noble work, that with feet shod with love to God, and with strength imparted from on high, he was endeavouring to clamber the ascent of human duty—duty of the creature to its Creator, of the sinner to his Saviour, of the brother to his fellow-man—and that, as he ascended, the young man was experiencing that duties became privileges, and that even now their ways were ways of pleasantness, and all their paths were peace.

On a bright afternoon in May, that Rowland had been enjoying a ride on the sea-shore, he had fastened Jeanette to a stake on the links, whilst he searched among the rocks for some of the bright and wonderful sea-anemones that there abounded. He removed a few from their rocky nests, and placed them in a small tin can that he had brought with him. "What treasures these will be for Ethie's new aquarium!" thought Rowland, examining their varied beauties. "How wisely they are constructed for the supply of their few wants! How suited for the place, which in our Father's vast creation they fill!" And then he began to muse on the impossibility of a God, whose minutest work testified deep design, giving man a living soul with ardent aspiration after Him, and yet withholding any revelation of Himself or of His will. He thought of Sir Claude Wentworth's denial of the inspiration of Scripture, and then exclaimed, "But does it not give to man his birthright? Does it not assure him of life and immortality; without revelation, how could we do otherwise than conjecture, whether man the highest, like this creature almost the lowest of the animal world, is formed merely to live and die, merely to enjoy life whilst it lasts, and drop into the grave when it is over? What a dark, uncertain future would ours be, did not Scripture assure us, 'The morning cometh!' What a wearisome ascent, were we not told that in the 'Father's house are many mansions!' I would rather be the lowest creature upon the earth, than a man without a revelation of his Creator's

design in forming him, of his Father's character, or of his future destiny."

Rowland had nearly regained the spot where Jeanette was fastened, when he observed, about fifty yards distant, two women, each holding an infant child. Nearer him there stood three little things, looking intently at his horse. They wore no shoes, no cap; a thin, tattered-looking garment, seemed to hang on each of them; but as they saw Rowland, the little curly-haired urchins ran away, and stood peeping out from behind their mothers' dresses. Rowland then perceived that in the side of the sandy bank were huts, with a kind of door, a kind of chimney, and in two or three, a sort of window. The roofs were covered with the long bents that grew all over the hillocks, and Rowland did not wonder that he had never before observed these extraordinary human habitations. He was hardly courageous enough yet to go among the strange people, but he marked their abode, and determined to propose to Ethelda a visit of inspection.

As he rode away, his conscience rebuked him for neglecting an opportunity of doing good. He more than once irresolutely drew the bridle to return, but his endeavours to gain the victory over self were not sufficiently strong; he at length quieted his mind by promising to visit the huts another day, accompanied by his beloved sister. Then, giving the well-known signal, his gentle horse cantered far across the links.

On returning, he passed James Clark's cottage, and

Jeanette, almost of its own accord, turned towards the gate of the lane through which it stood. The little Bessy was able again to play about; but the poor lad was growing daily more and more weak, and it was very evident that he was nearing the end of his earthly pilgrimage.

"How is James to-day?" asked Rowland of the mother, who opened the door.

"Aye, sir, he's no better; he will never get up May hill, the year. He was out a wee bit the day, but he came in very shabby like."

"I am sorry to hear that, James," said Rowland to the boy, who was crouching over the fire, as if it had been Christmas. "I was in hopes the fresh air, this morning, would have done you good."

"I thought it did me some good, sir, but I've been all in a tremble since."

"Perhaps you went too far?"

"I suppose I did; but I walked down to the water, and it was so pleasant like—just clear as glass—and then I began to cough terrible."

"There is a brighter land than this, James, where the river is altogether clear, where upon its banks grows the tree of life; where we may ever walk, and never tire, for in that land the inhabitant shall no more say, 'I am sick.'"

"That's heaven, sir, isn't it? I thought of it when I was a-down yonder."

"Yes, James, I mean heaven,—the promised land."

"Promised to such as ye, but not to the like of me."

"Yes, James, promised to you if you will but go to Jesus."

"Well, sir, I have been saying the prayer you taught me, very often. • Is that going to Jesus?"

"If you say it from the bottom of your heart, really wishing it."

"I do wish it, sir; the thought came over me the other night, when you spoke of gaining all the world and losing the soul."

"But you don't wish it more than the Lord does himself. I remember thinking, that I was very anxious to be saved, and I was much surprised to find that Jesus was far more anxious than I. There is a beautiful story, that I was reading the other day. A New Zealander, once a heathen, had heard of the love of Jesus, but had been unable to believe how completely that love could blot out all his sins. One morning the missionary went to see him, for the poor man was very ill, near death. He found him looking bright and cheerful. 'Sir,' he said, 'I had last night a dream. I thought that I was climbing up a steep mountain: I tried to get on; I could not—I always fell back again. I sat down very sad and hopeless, for I wanted to get to the other side of the steep, when I saw a drop of blood fall upon it, and it began to melt,—it melted all away; there was a level passage left for me.' 'My friend,' said the missionary,

‘and what do you understand from this?’ ‘Oh, sir,’ he replied, ‘the blood,—the blood of Jesus—can melt away my sins.’ Now, James, can you just believe as true, that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from *all* sin, and therefore from your sin?”

“I’ll try, sir; will ye print me that verse?”

“Yes, that I will,” and Rowland’s first work that evening was to print, in large and distinct letters, those blessed words.

As the young student became more and more interested in practical work, his taste for Greek and Latin seemed to diminish, and often did he mutter, as he went towards his skylit rooms for the purpose of study, “That detestable Latin! Those horrid classics!” Mr. Alleyne heard his son one day indulging in these epithets; and then he spoke to him gently and wisely on the advantage, during after-life, of taking a good position at college, of disciplining the mind in youth, of forcing it to conquer what was naturally distasteful, and of laying a good and solid foundation for future usefulness. On Hybert such advice was always thrown away. He would listen with many impatient gestures, and show by his hasty retreat that the father’s words had no effect; but Rowland’s disposition was altogether different. He was not chafed by the parental admonition: but his usually rather grave countenance relaxing, he would say, “Well, father, no royal road to anything good or great. I shall some day

get over odious Latin and tiresome Greek; and then, perhaps, I may find out their concealed treasures. I won't give up!—Excelsior!" And then the youth would proceed to his little room to spend some hours in close, plodding study.

On the morning following the last recorded conversation with James Clark, he commenced his reading earlier than usual, that he might spend an hour before luncheon in running over to the invalid's with the large printed text which he had prepared. The poor boy was much worse; the difficulty of breathing had greatly increased, and his incessant cough occasioned much suffering. He was, however, more comfortably seated than before, being placed in a rough but commodious arm-chair. He was much pleased to see the text that Rowland had brought. He placed it before him and read it over to himself several times; and then looking up, his eye moistened with the tear which had been gathering,—"Yes, yes; 'from *all* sin'—thank you, sir," and then very slowly and solemnly he added, "Thank the Lord." Rowland felt encouraged, and uttered some sweet words of comfort; and as he left, the poor lad grasped his hand, and spoke as his breathing permitted, "God bless you, sir! bless you! I'm happy now. The drop of blood is a' enough for poor Jamie Clark." Rowland had intended speaking to the mother of various temporal needs, which he thought might require to be supplied, but his heart was too full.

He left the cottage silently, thanking his God in his inmost soul.

When he returned home, he begged Mrs. Crowe to take to the poor lad in the course of the evening whatever she thought might be useful. The worthy housekeeper repaired to the cottage as soon as possible, with a refreshing draught for the sick one, and some wine, should it be needed. He was stretched upon his straw pallet, gasping for breath. Some neighbours stood beside him, and one was Edward Arnold, the thoughtful framer of the rough arm-chair. Whilst Mrs. Crowe remained, the dying lad lay for a short time in comparative ease. Edward proposed to pray, and he commended his soul to the Saviour's care. After he rose, he inquired, "James, where lies your hope?"

The poor lad raised his languid eyes, and faintly uttered, "The blood."

The struggling for breath again was heard, and Mrs. Crowe left the poor boy in great bodily agony. It lasted but a few hours. Ere the morning's sun arose, his spirit, washed in the blood of the Lamb, returned unto the God who gave it, and joined those of just men made perfect.

Rowland had never thought that with poor Jamie dissolution would be so rapid. He rejoiced to know, that in this lately ignorant, careless boy, there had been manifested another trophy of "Victory through the blood of the Lamb;" but to his own mind, God, by Jamie's death, seemed, in the voice of warning, powerfully to speak, "Work, whilst it is

called day, for the night cometh when no man can work." He remembered the families on the links, concerning whom he had neglected the dictates of conscience, and he determined to seek their habitation without waiting the return of his beloved Ethelda.

CHAPTER X.

FIELDS WHITE UNTO THE HARVEST.

"Go, labour on! spend and be spent,
Thy joy to do thy Father's will;
It is the way the Master went,
Should not the servant tread it still?

See thousands dying at your side,
Your brethren, kindred, friends at home;
See millions perishing afar;
Haste, brethren, to the rescue come."

SOME days had passed before Rowland had the opportunity of accomplishing his purpose, and then the one came, on the evening of which, Ethelda, with her precious little charge, was expected at Alleyne. Rowland felt much inclined to wait one day longer, but a faithful inward monitor warned him of delay. "What would Ethie take to those people to win their regard?" thought Rowland; and then the idea struck him of a roll of coloured engravings of ships, which might amuse the children, and having sought out the six brightest of these, and put them into his pocket, with a school Testament of good print, and a few large-printed,

striking tracts, he mounted Jeanette, and cantered off in the direction of the links.

Rowland had much personal bravery. Fond of horsemanship, there was not a steed too fiery for him to mount; delighting in clambering, there was hardly a crag upon that rocky shore which he had not gained; excelling in rowing, the stormy sea had to him its special charms. Nor was he deficient in moral courage. At school he dared to say, "No," when he thought an action wrong, and would not care to be called mean, rather than exceed the allowance permitted by his father. Yet there was a foolish bashfulness in his disposition that was most difficult to conquer, and often showed itself on occasions almost absurd. At one time he would rather have met a wild bull than have spoken to Mrs. Crowe, and an hour's search for a favourite plant was far preferable to asking an under-gardener if he knew where it had been placed. It was with this feeling of timidity that he approached the sand-huts. The doors were wide open, but no one was to be seen. He stood outside, and knocked at one very gently. No reply. He knocked again with the same result—he knocked again, and more loudly, but in vain. He was turning away, when one of the curly-haired children came running round. The little fellow in his turn was afraid, and as Rowland said, "Here, my little man," he ran away as fast as possible. He waited some time, hoping that the child would return, but no one appeared. The other huts seemed likewise empty, and he was on the point of giving up the attempt as hopeless, when a

young woman came round the house, carrying one child on her back, and leading another by the hand. Whilst Rowland was hesitating what to say, the poor woman relieved him. "Good-day, your honour; you've found out our little cottage. Will ye not walk in and rest?"

"No, thank you, I have only just got off my horse. I saw some children playing here the other day, and I brought them these pictures, which I thought might perhaps amuse them."

"Ay, your honour, they're beautiful;" and she gazed on them for some time. "I never saw their like afore. I'll go and call the brattens;" and then she was off, but shortly returned, followed by about six boys and girls of various ages. These were bright-eyed, mischievous-looking children, who first glanced at Rowland,—then viewed the pictures,—then more boldly eyed the young gentleman,—and at length ventured to say, "Are these for us?"

"Would you like them?" inquired Rowland.

"Ay, to be sure."

"Like them, ay."

"I'll have this one."—"And I will have this."—"And I'll have that beauty yonder."—"And you, mavourneen, you shall have this one," said the mother to the little fellow that had toddled at her side. And the pictures seemed in jeopardy of speedy destruction from the many active fingers.

Unfortunately there were only six pictures for seven children, and each had appropriated one, excepting a gentle-

looking little girl of five or six years of age. Tears of disappointment filled her full blue eyes, but she did not say anything. Rowland had not observed the unsuccessful candidate for the treasures, but the little one's brother, a noble-looking boy of nine years old, saw it all. He had secured a splendidly-coloured steamboat, with flags floating from every mast. He looked at his picture twice or thrice, and then accosting Rowland, "Plase, your honour, will ye cut this picture here in two's?"

"Why, my boy? it would spoil it."

"No, sir, I think not; and I don't know how else I can make two pictures."

"But why do you want two?"

The boy's colour mounted in a moment. "That's my sister Elleen, yonder, and she hasn't any."

Rowland smiled at the Irish way of making one picture two, but he was delighted at the interesting trait of character thus manifested by the ragged boy.

"We must not cut it," he replied; "but if you will give that to Ellen, I will bring you a wooden ship with sails and masts, that you may make swim on the water."

"Oh, thank you, your honour. Here Elleen, darlint, is this big one for you, and I'm to have a wooden boat." And Rowland was well pleased to see the bright glances of the happy boy's eyes.

"Can any of you read?"

"No, your honour," replied the woman; "we have not had no larning. Peter's father, there, can read some."

"What is your other name, Peter?" said Rowland, turning to the same boy.

"M'Gee, your honour. There be five of us: me and Arthur, and Ellen, and Rose, and Catherine."

"And where are the rest?"

"Mother has Catherine with her, and Rose went away in the cholera, and Arthur, he is a big'un, he's goin' to be a soldier."

"Do you think your father will read this paper?"

"Ay, sure he will."

Rowland would have liked to have said a few words about Jesus. He knew that Ethie would have done so, but something seemed to seal his lips. The subject of the tract was, "the Cross," and inwardly praying that God would bless the silent messenger, he left the little colony, followed by the blessings of the youthful group.

Peter ran forward to hold his horse's rein, and with another promise of a speedy return, Rowland cantered away.

He was much pleased with the children, but he was displeased with himself. He felt that he had allowed an opportunity of telling something about their best Friend and only Saviour to pass away, and he did not know whether so favourable a one might again occur. However, it was a step gained; at the least he was sure of a welcome when next he went; he had made friends with the families, and he had made others happy.

"The progress up the Mount is pleasant," he soliloquised,

as he returned home ; " but when I would go forward, something holds me back ; when I would do good, evil is present with me. Oh, for more strength, for more resolution of purpose, and power of action ! "

It was on the afternoon of the same day that a man of intelligent, though modest mien, humble in his clothing, and trudging beneath the weight of a peddler's pack, might have been observed walking up the beautiful avenue that led to Laverock Priory. The broad walk was shaded by beech trees on either side, and their young and tender leaves seemed to delight in the soft rustle caused by the gentle breeze. The river also was faintly murmuring, as the clear stream rolled onwards ; and though the birds seemed waiting for eventide to pour forth their full melody, yet the notes of the linnet and thrush were occasionally heard, and the cuckoo's call sounded through the wood again and again.

Edward Arnold was not insensible to the beauties of Nature, but he thought of them as multiplied exceedingly by that blessed revelation, which he was endeavouring to make known.

Arrived at the hall, he asked for Sir Claude.

" He never sees the like of you," answered a footman, scornfully.

" He bade me call."

" A likely story ! "

" I speak the truth," said Edward, his eyes for a moment flashing with indignation. " Would you tell your master

that Edward Arnold, the colporteur, whom he saw at Mr. Alleyne's, of Alleyne, is here, and has called as he desired "

" And what may your ware be ? "

" Bibles and other books. "

" Bibles !—ha ! ha ! You're wrong in bringing them here ; they don't go down in this house. "

" They are, then, doubtlessly needed, " replied Arnold, quietly, and he took off his pack, undid the leather, and displayed to three or four of the servants, who had gathered round, the ten-penny gilt-edged copies of the Word of God, or the more expensive morocco ones, with marginal references.

" I have plenty of Bibles, anyhow, " said one of the housemaids ; " and I don't think many read their Bibles in this house. Have you no story books ? "

" Yes, several ; " and he opened a package of miscellaneous literature, all of which had a decidedly religious or moral tendency.

A book peddler was something quite novel ; and Edward, who had been at first so rudely received, was now surrounded by eager applicants for books.

" Here's ' Little Jane. ' What a neat book ! only sixpence ! I'll have it for my sister Jane. "

" And I'll take one of the ten-penny Bibles for my nephew up away there in the west. "

" Well ! but I want a better kind. Have you any half-crown ones ? I want it for my god-daughter. I must give her something handsome. "

"Please, sir, have you one with the references?" said a quiet, plain-looking girl.

"Well, Nell, are you going to pore over that Sunday afternoons?" inquired the footman.

"There, now, what does that concern you?" she replied quickly.

"Yes, my good girl," said Edward, "it concerns us all. In poring over the Bible, we are searching out a great secret, which is of the utmost consequence."

"I hate secrets!" said the cook.

"But this secret concerns our getting a fortune—a crown—a throne. I think she's a wise girl who tries to find it out; for it is a fortune we can never lose, a crown far brighter than what Queen Victoria wears, and a throne better than King Solomon's. The secret about it is truly in this book; but we can't find it out by merely reading it."

"What else, then, must we do?" asked the footman, sneeringly.

"Mark, learn, and inwardly digest," replied the upper housemaid, with an air of conscious superiority.

"Rather tough with its leathern back," said the footman, laughing coarsely at the same time.

Edward did not notice these remarks. He said—

"If we bring a light into a room that's full of people, who either cannot or will not open their eyes, we do not make them see. So, if we give you the Bible, the lamp of life, until the eyes of your understanding are opened, you

will never say with David, 'Thy word is a light unto my path.' "

"Then I suppose you think us all blind?" said the housemaid, with an offended air.

"I don't know you at all," said Edward. "Once I was blind; and then I never knew, that, though my sins had nailed Jesus to the cross, He, instead of hating me, loved me still. Until God opened my eyes, I could not understand that He was ready to receive me at once, without my waiting till I was ready to come; that all the fitness He required was my need of Him; that with all my sins I was welcome; that he never upbraided me, but only said, 'Go and sin no more.' "

"Well, you would make a good parson, at any rate," said the footman. "I don't think Sir Claude will like your preaching, but I suppose you wish to see him."

"Yes, he bade me call."

And as the footman went to inform his master the servants made their various purchases, poor Nell especially appearing pleased with the Reference Bible, which she had chosen.

Soon Edward was admitted into Sir Claude's library. It was a large room, with oaken floor and Turkey carpets, and handsome writing tables, whilst well-filled book-shelves covered the entire walls.

The young baronet received Edward kindly, and was pleased to hear of the success that he had hitherto experienced in colporteurage.

"I have been looking into the Bible, more than I ever did before, since last I was at Alleyne; and it is, I confess, the best book that I ever read, and likely to have a very beneficial effect upon the people; but I cannot believe that it came from God."

"Might I make bold to ask you, sir, in that case, how it came?"

"Good men wrote it."

"But, sir, they cannot have been good, if they were liars; and they tell us over and over again, that they speak not the word of man but of God."

"They were not deceivers, but deceived."

"It seems presumptuous of me to speak, sir; but the book is very dear to me. Would it not be passing strange if those men, who you say have made the finest book in the world, were all under a delusion? When far cleverer men than the poor fishermen of Galilee have tried to write a book as from heaven, they have made a strange mess of it. I was thinking that, when I was looking the other day over a book which the Mormons have, as their revelation. Then the Koran, and the Hindoo Shasters, and the old Greek Mythology, as they call it, are all quite different things to our Bible."

"How do you know that?"

"I've read extracts from them, sir."

"I believe you know more than I do; for I neither believe, nor don't believe. I hope to do one of the two some

day; but I hardly know what to read, for theology has been banished from this library."

"If a poor man, like me, might speak, I'd say, just keep to the Reference Bible. Scripture explains Scripture so wonderful; and if you read it, sir, upon your knees, God is sure to show you His way more perfectly."

"Well! I don't know about that last. I think it would be treating the Bible rather in the way that the Romanist regards his crucifix."

"I don't mean literal, sir. I meant, read the Bible, praying God that you may understand it."

"But how shall I pray without faith?"

"I don't understand the nice distinctions of theology, sir; but we do not read in the Bible, that when our Lord told the man with the withered hand to put it forth, he said, 'I cannot, for I have no strength.' Faith is the gift of God; not a locked-up, hidden mystery, but an open, poured-down gift."

"However freely given to others, it has not been bestowed on me."

"But it is offered, sir, and you have only to take it."

"I wish for it, Edward, I confess."

"Oh, then, sir, turn your wish into a prayer, and you will get it!"

Edward said this with an earnestness that almost startled Sir Claude. He, however, broke off the subject rather abruptly, by asking for a large printed Bible that he wished to give to an old man. This was soon purchased,

and after directions that Edward should partake of refreshment, ere he proceeded on his onward way, the rich and the poor man parted.

Which was the rich man? Surely he who could say, "All things are mine—life—death—things present—things to come," and could tell the other of the free,—the sovereign offers of his Father, God. He might be poor in this world, but he was rich in faith, and heir of an everlasting kingdom.

Sir Claude remained for some time in a deep reverie. He was surrounded by most of those enjoyments which are supposed to make life happy, but he felt their utter worthlessness. He resolved in his own mind, again and again, the question, "Which is best off, Edward Arnold or myself?" and as he looked up and saw from his window the young colporteur proceeding on his journey of blessing with an untired step, he envied that soul, which was conscious of thus fulfilling its Maker's will.

Suddenly the Heaven-sent thought appeared to strike him, that it would be well to search in the Bible itself for its own credentials. He determined that he would commence the New Testament, and opened the large-printed volume which he had just purchased. He read attentively, until he came to the blessed command and promise, "Ask, and you shall have; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "Here is what I want—a test given by the writer of the book, whereby I may know if it is true;," and looking unto heaven, he earnestly pleaded,

“ O God, if thou hast inspired this book, give unto me faith, according to the promise I have read, ‘ Ask, and you shall have ; seek, and you shall find.’ ”

In this petition there was not the simple faith of the little child, but there was the going unto Jesus of the weary and heavy-laden soul—the trying of the fountain by one who thirsted. God never said unto the seed of Jacob, “ Seek ye me in vain ; ” He never sent the hungry empty away ; He never denied His own promise, nor cast out him who came. The wish, by God’s own Spirit imparted, had become the prayer by God’s own Spirit breathed, and blessings, purchased by the blood of Jesus, were ready to be poured from on high on him who prayed.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SAND-HUTS.

"Jesus, where'er Thy people meet,
There they behold Thy mercy-seat;
Where'er they seek Thee Thon art found,
And every place is hallow'd ground."

It was a happy hour when Ethelda entered the old hall at Alleyne, with the little Harry by her side. Her beloved father was there to welcome her, and his eye filled with a tear of joy as he looked at his beautiful but delicate grand-child. The little boy had jumped from the carriage with glee; he had heard so much of grandpapa, that he expected to see a familiar face; but when he observed a stranger, he for a moment clung to Ethelda's dress.

The old man clasped the child to his heart. "My Percy's boy! How my poor wife would have liked to have seen her own child's son! God bless you, my darling!" and he fondly caressed the little fellow. The child looked at his grandfather for a few moments, and then spying the gold-fish in the window, he, with a childish bound, sprung

out of the old man's arms, and hastened to watch the beautiful things in his aunt's aquarium.

Mr. Alleyne delighted in little Harry. It was his greatest pleasure to bring him a new toy, or to show him a new picture, to give him a tit-piece of bread and jam at breakfast-time, or to gather for him in the garden all the flowers that the child might demand. The little prattler oftentimes amused his grandfather by his innocent remarks, and diverted what might otherwise have been a current of sad thoughts, whilst he again would laugh with his ride on grandpapa's foot, or canter off on the silver-headed stick, which he had transformed into his horse. Harry seemed somewhat in danger of being spoilt; but though grandpapa seldom contradicted him, he never interfered with Aunt Ethelda's management, and she strove hard to bring up the little one in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Boosa was still his favourite attendant, and Harry learnt, by slow degrees, to speak to him more gently, and to quell the angry passion that would lead him to raise his little hand to strike, and his tongue to speak, in Hindostanee, words that no Christian child should utter. He grew increasingly anxious that Boosa should love Jesus; and often, when the black attendant and the fair English child walked together, the little instructor would say,—

“My Boosa, you see the bright sun,—it was my Father in heaven made it; you see the beautiful flowers,—my Father in heaven made them, and every thing, and you and me. My Boosa, won't you say, he is Boosa's Father, too?”

And sometimes he would recount the Bible stories Aunt Ethelda had told him, and sometimes would try to teach Boosa to sing of the "happy land," or of the "Hosannahs," that little children raised to the Lord Jesus.

One evening he was seated on his aunt's knee, and his usually merry countenance was clouded.

"Auntie dear, I don't think Boosa will ever learn to love Jesus."

"Why, my darling?"

"Because I have been such a naughty boy. I got into such a passion this morning, and kicked, and struck him."

"Oh, Harry! why did you do that?"

"I don't know; I meant to try and be very good. I suppose Satan came near and told me."

"But Harry might have got strength from Jesus to fight with Satan."

"Why doesn't God kill Satan, auntie? I wish he was dead; I should like to crush him beneath a cart-wheel."

"That would do no good, Harry."

"No, auntie, I know; for he is a spirit. But God could kill him, couldn't He?"

"Yes, if He chose; but I think God wishes us to show that we are brave soldiers, and love our King, by fighting against our King's enemies."

"Then am I a soldier, auntie?"

"I trust so, darling,—a soldier of Jesus. Satan is fighting with you, for he wants both to get Harry's soul and Boosa's."

"But he shan't," said Harry, in a very determined tone.

"Why?"

"Jesus won't let him, and Jesus is stronger than Satan. Do you think Satan thought that he had got my soul this morning?"

"Perhaps he did, and through you he very likely hurt Boosa."

The little boy's eyes filled with tears. "Yes, auntie, Boosa said, 'You wicked Master Harry, don't tell me anything more about Jesus.' I am so very sorry, but it is so difficult to be good."

"Very difficult, but Jesus will help His little child;" and again did Ethelda teach the infant mountain-clamberer how he might go "from strength to strength."

"Ethie, dear," said Rowland a few mornings after her return, "I wish you would ride down with me to the links this afternoon; I do wish you, very much, to speak to those poor people."

"With pleasure, Rowly. Papa is not going further than the garden this afternoon, so I am quite at liberty. I long to see these demi-savages who are so near us."

"I don't know if we can quite call them that,—at least not my little friends Peter and Ellen."

"We must at any rate endeavour to raise them from their savage state; we will lay our plans, and, by God's help, I trust we may succeed."

The horses were at the door immediately after luncheon; the toy-boat was not forgotten, nor yet the precious word

of God ; and the brother and sister set off joyfully on their mission of love. Bright visions were in Rowland's eye—reformation of parents—instruction of children—cleansing of habitations—change of heart. Once, he would have thought that this was almost within Ethelda's power, but now he remembered, " Not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God ;" and his heart ascended silently in prayer, that God would speed their mission and direct their way, that He would rend the cloud, and bid the sun-beam of mercy dart forth, which should fill those poor people with joy unspeakable and light unimaginable. As they rode down the village of Alleyne, they stopped at Edward Arnold's door to inquire concerning the success of the col-porteur, who, they learned, had not yet returned from his journey westward. Whilst talking, Mr. Graham joined them. From him they heard that Edward had met with more than the success that he had anticipated, and had requested that another large parcel of books might be sent to him to the village of Rotherburn, where, for a few days, he proposed remaining. Ethelda told Mr. Graham about the people whom Rowland had discovered in the sand-huts. He had heard of them ; he had twice made ineffectual attempts to find them at home, but his mind being occupied with other things, he had of late forgotten them.

" I confess I have been negligent," said the good old man ; " but though it is no excuse for me, if your brother, Miss Alleyne, will consider that little district especially his own, we shall see good spring out of evil. May God speed

you both, and may you gather there some of the precious gems that shall ever shine in the New Jerusalem ! ”

Jeanette and Dapple Grey did not like standing. They thought themselves at length released, when again the rein was tightened, as they met Sir Claude Wentworth ;—he was in search of Edward Arnold, but on hearing that the young man was still from home he turned his horse’s head, and accompanied Ethelda and her brother towards the sea-side.

At first the conversation was desultory, and then the accounts, which had been received of the colporteur and his work, were mentioned, and to these Sir Claude listened with marked attention.

“ I don’t know why I feel so great an interest in that young man,” said Sir Claude ; “ I suppose it is that he is so intelligent, and earnest, and one-hearted. I never saw any one more completely forget himself, in his anxiety concerning the mission of his book.”

“ It is anxiety concerning no common mission,” said Ethelda, rather hesitatingly.

“ And I can well understand that those, who believe it, feel no common anxiety concerning it. The marvellous thing is, that so many who are Bible-readers, and profess to be Bible-believers, are not Bible-distributors. I fancy that if I knew the Bible came down from God, and knew that it was the message of salvation, I should wish everybody to know it likewise.”

“ Oh, Sir Claude ! I wish you did know it,” said Ethel-

da, in her earnest manner ; for she felt that this young man was not far from the kingdom of heaven.

" May God grant your wish ! " he said inwardly, and with a look of gratitude he parted from the brother and sister, at a place where two roads met.

Many conflicting thoughts passed through his mind as he rode on the side of the river whence he looked at the peaceful vicarage, the church and its spire, the many-tombed churchyard ; and again and again did his tearful eye rise to heaven with the silent aspiration, " That I may find the truth and lose it not," and he thought of the promise, " Seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened." Ethelda and Rowland likewise pursued their way in the opposite direction. To many, their mission to the sand-huts might appear a work of trifling importance, but the immortal souls of men were at stake, and the message that they carried was a royal pardon to the captives—tidings of a way of safety to the long-lost wanderers.

The children soon descried Rowland's approach, and with their bare little feet and ragged clothes ran forwards to welcome him. Rowland introduced his sister, and having, with much more ease than usual, given Peter the promised boat, and received the boy's oft-repeated thanks, he left to Ethelda the rest of her conversation. Outside the hut where they stood there were gathered four grown-up women, three young girls of modest mien, but wild and uncouth in appearance, and nearly a dozen children of all sizes, from

our old friend Peter to a sleeping baby, whose little span of time could be reckoned in the plural by weeks only.

Ethelda heard from the mothers which claimed the respective children, and listened to some short tale concerning the proficiency of Mrs. Macartney's Maggy, of Mrs. Malony's Catherine, of Mary O'Donnell's Patrick, and of Mrs. M'Gee's "Peter, the boy yonder." The difficulty was, the hearing all the stories at very nearly the same time; and the danger was, lest she should raise maternal jealousy, by appearing to listen to one relation more attentively than to another. Ethelda, however, really cared to hear most of "Peter yonder, and Elleen the bairn," perhaps because the noble, manly brow of this young Arab at once arrested her attention.

Having listened for some time, she inquired if any amongst the children could read. A negative reply only could be given both for the old and young. "I know, however," she continued, "that all children love to hear a story. Shall I tell one, which I feel sure will interest everybody here?"

"Plase, yer lady, we should like to hear it," said Mrs. M'Gee, with a bright smile, and Peter forthwith rushed into one of the neighbour's huts.

"What are you afther, yonder, Peter?" cried Mrs. Malony, loudly.

"I'm getting a seat for the lady, and your chair with a back is better than ours, that haven't none."

"Oh, yes; and you're welcome," said Mrs. Malony,

turning to Ethelda, and speaking in a rapidly changed tone.

And soon Peter had returned. "Plase, my lady, it is our best chair, for we have not got no other. This leg is broke, but I'll make it sound by putting the stone underneath. Now, my lady, it will not tumble, if you'll sit a little to this side, and I'll get the gentleman a sort of one;" and off was Peter once more, into another of the semi-savage habitations, and brought out a rough piece of wood, which had been cast upon the beach in a storm, and had been converted into a stool by Peter's ready hammering on of three rough pieces of strong stick. Peter sat down at Ethelda's right hand, and the little congregation of women and children sat, or stood, or lolled, on the side of the sandy hillock that rose opposite Ethelda. She offered a silent prayer that God would teach her what to say, and that He would break the stony heart, and bend the stubborn will, and make this the hour of His power.

"I think," she said, "that both mothers and little children would like to hear the story of a very dear babe,—the very best babe that ever was born on earth. It was the child of a poor woman, whom God loved very much. No man was its father, but it was the Son of God. Its mother's name was Mary."

"Was it the blessed Virgin Mary, the holy mother of God?" inquired Mrs. Malony.

"It was the blessed Virgin Mary," replied Ethelda. "She loved God, and one day she had a stranger visitor, dif-

ferent to any you or I ever saw. He was a bright angel. Mary was afraid; would you fear to see an angel?"

"Ay, sure we would, you lady."

"But why? are they not very beautiful and very good?"

"Ay, we think so, sure enough. But we are too bad for the Lord to send them on a message of good to us."

"And so the blessed Mary thought, but the angel told her not to be afraid, for God loved her very much, and had chosen her to be the mother of Him who should be called Saviour, or Jesus, because He would save us from sin. Mary was glad, very glad; and after the angel had left her she sang a sweet song full of joy, because of God her Saviour."

Then Ethelda told of the long journey to Bethlehem, of the "no room in the inn," of the stable-shelter, and of the heavenly infant's birth. Then she described the shepherds watching in Bethlehem's plains, the bright light in the midnight sky, the angel's message, and the shepherds' worship of the infant Saviour.

"And now," continued Ethelda, "I am not, dear friends and little children, telling a wonderful and beautiful story about a person who never cared for us—but I am telling you of our God, of Him who made that wide ocean," and she pointed to the waters, the constant roar of which was heard; "who made yonder blue sky and bright sun," and she pointed upwards; "who made these dear babes," and she looked at the little ones; "who made us all, who loves

us all, who is now in yonder beautiful heaven, making ready places for all who go to Him, and who has promised to you and me, that if we come He will never say, 'I cannot hear you.' Shall we go to Jesus now? shall we ask Him now to be the Lord our Saviour, to take away all our wickedness, and to make us holy?"

"Yes, my lady, sure we will," replied several voices; and Ethelda bade them kneel, and beside that wide seashore, beneath that high, blue canopy, Ethelda and her brother bowed the knee, and the wild Irish children and their untaught mothers bent likewise, and a simple, earnest petition in the name of the One Mediator ascended to the Hearer and Answerer of prayer. The tear which spoke the earnest desire of the heart had gathered in Ethelda's eye; and as Peter M'Gee ran forward to assist the young lady in mounting her horse, she observed that emotion appeared to choke his utterance.

"What do you wish to say, my boy?"

"I wish to say 'thank you' a thousand times, and I'm sure what you say is nothing else than the rare truth."

"Why, Peter?"

"Because it is too beautiful for anybody to think; and what would have been the use of His coming, if He hadn't loved us? But will you come the next time, when father is at home?"

"When does he come home?"

"He leaves off work general at six, but I'm sure isn't it, that he'd like to hear you speak."

"I'll try then, Peter, to come in the evening next time — God bless you, dear boy !"

Ethelda and Rowland rode home rather silently, but in the evening they talked over their visit to the huts, and rejoiced in this path of usefulness, opening in their mountain ascent.

"And, Ethie," said Rowland, "we must not forget to pray for our poor people."

"Right, my precious brother. And we know that our God will not be slow to answer, for He cares for His lost sheep far more than we can think."

Poor Peter's simple prayer ascended that night with those of Ethelda and Rowland Alleyne.

God heard in heaven, His dwelling-place, and prepared a gracious rain, to refresh this barren and thirsty portion of His inheritance.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DRUNKARD'S COTTAGE.

"Speak gently! it is better far
To rule by love than fear.
Speak gently! let not harsh words mar
The good we might do here.

Speak gently to the erring! Know
They may have toll'd in vain:
Perchance unkindness made them so;
Oh, win them back again!"

"I THOUGHT of going over to the Clarks this morning," said Ethelda to Rowland at breakfast-time. "I must go early, for don't you wish, dear father, to drive into Ancaster this afternoon?"

"I was talking of it; but who are the Clarks?"

"The family at the Dry Mill Gate. The poor boy died, and I want to persuade the mother to send little Bessy, who was so scalded a few months since, to school."

"Promising, no doubt, to be yourself at all the expense?"

"But, father dear, there are several of the family, and they seem very poor."

"Is there a man to work?"

"Yes, there are two, the eldest son is old enough to have regular wages."

"And of how many does the numerous family consist?"

"There are father and mother of course, and the eldest son, and there was poor James; but he is gone. Then, I think, there are two who scare the crows, and one girl who sometimes goes to school, and Bessy, the one that I wish to send to the infant-school."

"Then, there are only two who can do nothing to earn their bread; that family should be comfortably off."

"They appear miserably poor," replied Ethelda, thoughtfully; "but I allow, dear father, they are not a pattern family: the mother is always untidy and complaining, and her home is the picture of discomfort. Perhaps she drives her husband to the public-house, but I felt sorry for the poor little girl, who has already suffered from the mother's carelessness. They will *never* send her to the infant-school, if they have to pay two-pence a-week."

"If you pay for her, Ethie, you are only encouraging idleness. Help people who are really trying to help themselves. You can drag no one up the hill of improvement."

"But then the poor, unfortunate child, dear father?"

"Well, don't pay for her altogether. Give one penny, on condition of the mother giving the other; or offer to put the child in the clothing-club if the mother sends her to school. I fear school lessons will do little good when home lessons are so bad."

"But it is a counter-influence, dear father; and God, to show that His power is everything, sometimes allows even little children to be very useful."

"Oh, I won't stop you, child. Your mother used to talk that way. I only caution you. I like to encourage those who are really trying to live respectably."

"I believe papa is right,—partly, at any rate," said Ethelda to Rowland, after her father left the breakfast-table; "and yet we have the example of Jesus, who came to seek and to save them that were lost."

"Yes," said Rowland; "and the highways and hedges were to be sought, and people invited to come in."

"But that does not refer to the giving of charity. We must 'do good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of faith.' O Rowly! the spending of money is a fearful responsibility; and the alms given may, very easily, do harm rather than good."

"Then what must we do—hoard it, or give it all to societies, and thus throw the responsibility off our own shoulders?"

"Rather take it, with all the rest of our cares, to God. He knows the channel through which it will bring most glory to His great name. He will teach us thoughtful love. He will in some way make us to know the wants His people feel."

"I was laying some plans, Ethie; but I fear now that you won't like them. I must think them all over *once* more, and we will discuss them this evening. My father

wishes me to ride over to Sir Claude's this afternoon with a note; and now for a morning with old Homer and Virgil."

Ethelda's mission concerning Bessy Clark was very unsuccessful. The mother declared that she "could not afford a penny anyhow;" that "the child was not decently clothed;" that she could "not get Nancy ready for the school, much less this wee thing;" that it was "all very well for gentlefolks to attend to the schooling, but not for the like of her." Ethelda waited patiently until the unhappy woman's volubility was stayed; and then she spoke to her firmly and gently concerning her duty to her children.

"Well, ma'am, it may be all very true;" and, choking with a passionate emotion, she continued, "but a mother, the likes of us, don't get many thanks. The very lads I have borne, cursed me this morning to my face, and joined their drunken father in reviling me. It's very hard to bear; and I'm sure they had no occasion to treat me so."

"It is very sad," replied Miss Alleyne. "Are they coming in to dinner?"

"No, they're at work four mile off: nor to tea neither. They'll go to the public-house till ten o'clock the night, spend all their money, and leave me and the girls to starve."

Ethelda marked the woman's flashing eye, and felt sure that her temper as well as her slovenliness drove her husband from his fireside. She sat beside her for some time, and endeavoured to persuade her, by all that she felt dear, to strive to win again her husband's regard.

The woman at length seemed softened; and as Ethelda arose to go, she said,—

“Well, ma’am, I wish we could send the child. You might make something of my husband, if you could talk to him about it. He is general at home on the Sunday afternoons.”

“I will try and see him then,” said Ethelda; “and now good morning, Mrs. Clark.”

“Good morning, ma’am, and thank you for your trouble. I’m much obleeged for your talking so kind like to me.”

The object of Ethelda’s visit was not accomplished, but yet there seemed a dawn, a small dawn of hope; and as she crossed the threshold of the door, she prayed that the inmates of that miserable habitation might yet become the happy people whom the Lord hath blessed. She had time to go round by old Colin and Jeanie’s. It was a bright sunny day, and the old man was gathering some weeds out of his little garden, and blind Jeanie was seated at the cottage door, industriously knitting worsted stockings.

“Good day, Colin! I’m glad to see you, able to be in the garden again.”

“Yes, thank you, ma’am;” and the old man looked up cheerfully. “Heaven’s sunshine is, after all, the best cure for rheumatics.”

“And what is best for a desponding spirit?” said Ethelda, in a somewhat depressed tone.

“Ah! for that, it is the light of the Lord’s counte-

nance, I suppose. But, ma'am, you may not be suffering from that?" continued Colin.

"No, not exactly," said Ethelda; "but I have just been in the cottage of a drunkard; and it is a sad, helpless, hopeless sight."

"Not past the Lord's power, Miss Alleyne. Look at poor auld Colin; is not he a monument of the Almighty's grace?"

"True, Colin; and God's hand is not shortened that it cannot save. Will you, my old friend, pray for a poor drunkard's family, all of whom seem far from God?"

"Ay, ma'am, sure I will, and Jeanie too; for what maketh ours to differ? Free grace: 'tis all free grace;" and old Colin took the back of his dusty hand, and wiped away the tears, that had altogether blinded his dim eyes.

"God is more ready to give grace than we are to seek it," said Ethelda.

"That's very true. The clouds often stand over our heads rich with blessings; and they wait long, and then disperse without a shower, just because we do not ask. I was just thinking the shower of last night had made the weeds far easier to pull up."

"And what would you have me learn from that?" said Ethelda, with a pleasant smile.

"Well, ma'am, you see when God's grace comes, the strong weed of drunkenness even may be right uprooted."

"Thank you, Colin, I must just trust my God and take courage;" and Ethelda left the cottage, where she seemed

to catch some of the sunbeams that lighted the old man and blind Jeanie.

As Ethelda returned from church the following Sunday, she stopped at the cottage at Dry Mill Gate. Two men, habited in their working dresses and smoking pipes, were seated on a rough bench outside the door. Ethelda's heart rather misgave her as she approached, and it was with a timid voice that she inquired,—

“Are you the father of poor James that died here?”

“It's me, ma'am,” said the further-off man, remaining in the same position.

“Then you are the father of little Bessy, too; she's your youngest child, I suppose?”

“I hope so, ma'am, and I hope she always will be.”

“You would like her to be a comfort to you?”

“Well! I 'spose so, but I don't expect it.”

“Why? You are looking on the dark side, I think.”

“Because I have no comfort in any of them. There's my wife there, she keeps my house a perfect pigsty, and scolds me whenever I put my foot in it.”

“That's very sad; but treat her kindly, and I dare say things would mend.”

“Oh! I treats her well enough anyhow. I trouble her very little, and she has her own way.”

“But, about little Bessy; I like that little girl.”

“Do you, ma'am? I always thought she was the best of the lot,” said the father, with rather a pleased expression of voice.

"I was wishing to do something for her, only I must have her father's help."

"Thank you, ma'am."

"If she was at the infant-school, she might have the advantage of being in the clothing-club. If you sent her there, it is twopence a-week. I would pay for her clothing-club ticket, and then, at Christmas, she would get a nice warm cloak, or pair of shoes, or something comfortable."

"Well! ma'am, just please yourself, I'm very agreeable; I'll give her twopence on the morrow, and the mother can send her off."

"I am glad you like the plan; I will tell a nice little girl, who passes to school this way, to call, and then Bessy will not be afraid to go alone. Do you like to read?"

"Yes, ma'am, well enough. I sometimes see the papers at the public."

"I'll sometimes leave you one, if you would like to read it, on this pleasant seat, out here. I have an interesting book, which I can leave with you to-day, the 'Bar of Iron.' Good morning, Mr. Clark; and you promise to send Bessy to the school to-morrow?"

"It sha'n't be my fault if she ain't there. Good morning, ma'am, and thank you."

Ethelda left the cottage somewhat encouraged. The man did not appear to her quite so bad, as she had expected to find him. There was evidently the father's latent feeling towards the little child, and she thought of "How much more will your Father in heaven give His Holy Spirit to

them that ask?" She thought of old Colin's "cloud of blessings" dispersing without the gracious rain, because prayer was needed that the heavens might be opened and the weary heritage refreshed. She pleaded in secret with her God during that Sunday afternoon for the drunkard and the drunkard's wife, and for their poor lost children; and she believed that prayer has power with God, and shall prevail.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE INFANT'S MINISTRY.

"A star of early dawn, and bright,
Shining within thy sacred light;
A beam of grace to all around;
A little spot of hallow'd ground."

"I AM so very, very happy, darling auntie; I can't tell you how happy I am," said little Harry, as his bright blue eyes sparkled with joy, and his little legs and arms were tossed in all directions to dissipate, as it were, the exuberance of his spirits.

"What is the matter, Harry?"

"My pussy-cat has got four little kittens; one quite black, and one with some yellow on its back, and all quite blind. That is one thing: and the other is—it does make me so glad;" but the little eyes became graver, and the tone more subdued: "Boosa says, that he will come in to prayers, for he can understand what grandpapa says: and, auntie dear, he does think that Jesus Christ must be good, since he has heard so many beautiful stories about Him."

“That is good news, Harry. And does Boosa pray to Jesus?”

“Yes, auntie, but he prays to his stupid idols, too; and I tell him Jesus won’t like that. But, you see, he is not sure yet.”

“What can make him sure, Harry?”

“I try very hard, auntie, but I can’t. Could you, dear auntie? But God can, can’t He?”

“Yes, darling; and we must pray very hard that He will.”

“Oh, yes, He will: I know that.”

“How, Harry?”

“Because he has said it, you know. You taught me, auntie dear, that text, ‘Ask, and ye shall have;’ and God won’t tell a lie.”

“No, never, my boy; remember that. And I hope God is already beginning to answer Harry’s prayer. But how will he save your Boosa?”

Harry was silent for a little while. “It must be by the blood of Jesus; then when Boosa goes to heaven, and Jesus says, ‘How have you got here?’ he will say, ‘Because you have washed me in your blood.’ Won’t that make Boosa clean?”

“Yes, Harry. The Bible says that the precious blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin.”

“I thought so. Now I may go and tell Boosa that he may come in every day to prayers; mayn’t I?”

“Yes, that you may.”

"And, auntie, when will you come to see the kittens?"

Ethelda smiled, and promised a speedy compliance; and as the little fellow bounded from the room with that buoyancy which marks health as well as happiness, his aunt thanked her God for these blossoms of early promise on the tender plant which He had intrusted to her culture; and she prayed that they might ripen to scatter precious seeds on earth, and to bloom forever in the Paradise above. Sometimes she trembled lest this beloved child's frail, little tenement should fall. "Jesus often goes into His garden to gather lilies," she would muse; "but He does not always choose those who are only in bud. If it be His will, I do long that dear Harry be spared to fight manfully in the Church militant, to gain a glorious crown of righteousness, the purchase of His blood."

Little Harry ran out to the lawn, where Boosa sat watching each movement of his young master; whilst Rover frolicked with him quite unceremoniously. Soon "grand-papa" and another gentleman stepped out from the library window. Harry ran to meet them. He had never experienced any one unkind, and so had full confidence in the stranger. Nor was it misplaced. The little boy was soon borne aloft on the gentleman's shoulder; and Rover looked at his companion, wagged his tail, made observation that he was out of reach, and in a dignified manner walked back to the sunny spot of his choice, and curled himself very deliberately for repose.

"And you are the little chatterer that I heard talking to your aunt?"

"Yes: but where did you hear me? I never say *you*."

"Ah! have you never heard that walls have ears?"

"Walls, ears!" said Harry, laughing; "you are as bad as Boosa."

"How do you mean? What does Boosa think?"

"He thinks pieces of stone have ears, and can hear his prayers. Isn't that nonsense?"

"Indeed it is: but don't you tell him better?"

"Yes. I tell him that God, who made that bright, bright sun, made Boosa, and that He has ears to hear him pray."

"And does Boosa believe you?"

"Not quite; for he is not sure that God's Bible is true. He does not know about it, you see, as we do."

"And what do you know about it, little man?"

"Oh! I know that the great God wrote it. Wasn't it kind of God to write a book all about Jesus, and tell how very much He loves us?"

"And can you read it?"

"Not yet; for I am a little boy, you see. But when I am big like you ——"

"Then may your faith be as simple and as pure as it is now," said Sir Claude, with a sigh; and he put the little boy down, kissing that open little forehead beneath its sunny curls. Little Harry observed between the trees, that the

peacock was standing with its tail outspread; and off he was in a moment to view the splendid bird.

Sir Claude and Mr. Alleyne continued to walk together, and they spoke of the little child's simplicity.

"Yes," said old Mr. Alleyne. "It illustrates the Saviour's words, 'Except ye become as little children, ye can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

"I never understood that text before," said Sir Claude, thoughtfully. "I have been weighing carefully, for some time, all the arguments for and against Christianity. My understanding is almost convinced that the mind which inspired Scripture is divine; but I cannot trust like that simple child."

Old Mr. Alleyne was a man of very few words, and he replied, "Don't look to yourself trusting God; look to God holding you."

As Sir Claude rode home, he pondered over these words; and as he burnt his solitary lamp in his library till after midnight, little Harry's conversation with his aunt Ethelda was all remembered; and his earnest eye was raised to heaven with the supplication, "When my soul shall stand before Thee, O God, enable me with all my unworthiness to say, 'Thou hast washed me in Thy most precious blood.'" The promise, "Ask, and ye shall have," was again pleaded; and the little child's simple assurance, "God cannot tell a lie," seemed re-echoed from above. In peace he laid himself down to rest that night, for at length he believed, that in life or in death, his God sustained him.

With hope he arose on the following morning; and the inquiry of his thankful soul was, "Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?"

He commenced the ascent of the holy mount of God; and as he clambered upwards, the road became more bright, the light of God's countenance shone, and the clouds of doubt in which he had so long been enveloped appeared to hang in the valley below. To him these were no longer dark. He beheld them illuminated from above, and their very presence seemed to cause a stronger reflection of the ever-brightening rays of the Sun of Righteousness and of life.

CHAPTER XIV.

STAND STILL.

"Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,—
Nearer to Thee!"

It was on a brilliant evening in the month of June, that Rowland and Ethelda rode to the sand-huts, in order that they might accomplish their promised visit. The air from the sea felt very fresh; and as they cantered along the smooth and hard sand,—the tide rapidly advancing, and the rippling waves almost touching the feet of their steeds, they felt their enjoyment enhanced by the remembrance that their heavenly Father's hand had wrought the wonders of that mighty deep. Some of the little children were, with their tiny fingers, digging holes in the sand, and laughing as the water filled the ditch which they had formed round their miniature mounds; whilst Peter and one or two bigger boys were at some distance searching for sand-eels. His quick eyes soon discovered his friends advancing on horseback.

"There they are!" he exclaimed; "and father is at home to-night. Bill! Pat! come on, lads. It's the good lady that's like an angel, and the gentleman that gave me the boat:" and Peter left his companions far behind, and was at the rail above the huts as soon as Rowland and Ethelda arrived, and with a native grace held the somewhat impatient horse as the lady alighted.

"Oh, my lady! and I'm glad to see you, and father's at home." And Peter looked at Rowland, too, with sparkling eyes; only he had not time to repeat his welcome, which was intended for both, because he bounded off to tell his parents and the rest of the colony of the strangers' arrival. The huts were erected on the sandy links that divided the river from the sea. They were very near the mouth of the same stream that flowed through the grounds at Alleyne, and round the village castle and churchyard. Here it had expanded to be, at full tide, almost an arm of the sea; a narrow, wooden-way bridge had been erected across it, and along this the women sometimes proceeded carefully, that they might make sundry purchases in the opposite village. On that evening two of them had gone on this errand, and some of the men had not returned from their harbour-work; either remaining beyond the regular hours, or resorting to the beershop, there to spend a portion of their hard-earned wages. There were, however, many precious souls, inhabitants of the sand-huts. All came together, for all were pleased to feel that Rowland and his sister cared for them. Rowland had not yet courage to speak before Ethelda; and

he was well content to be a learner also, trusting ere long to tread in the footsteps of her whom he so loved. There were about six men present : and as they, the women, and children, were arranging themselves on the sandy slopes, Ethelda talked to Patrick M'Gee, the father of the intelligent Peter. He was a fine, tall, stalwart-looking man, with dark hair resting on a high and sunburnt forehead. His eyebrows were strongly marked ; and beneath them shone expressive, black eyes, which might often flash with anger. He had large whiskers, which, however, did not conceal the openness of expression that his whole physiognomy presented. Ethelda liked Patrick, and felt that he was a fit father for so noble a boy as Peter. She spoke to him of his son, and then of the object of her own and her brother's visit.

" Well, ma'am, I wish to hear what your lady has to say, for we don't often hear many words about these things. The priest comes to the village over there, about twice a-year ; and I don't know, after all, if he cares much for us. But I don't wish to hear anything against the Holy Mother Church, my lady."

" Oh, no, Patrick !" replied Ethelda, smiling : " all I wish to do, is to tell you of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ—of Him who loves poor lost sinners."

" Such words must be good. Do go on, your lady."

All were now seated ; and then Ethelda read some verses from her Bible, which proved man's total helplessness and great sin, and endeavoured to press this home to the consciences of all around her. The little assembly listened at-

tentively. Then, having earnestly lifted up her heart in prayer unto the Lord, she made known unto them, how they were welcome—how Jesus longed to save them—how He cared for those who could not save themselves—how earnestly He said, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life." Ethelda spoke gently and earnestly; and as she begged of those who listened to go to Christ with all their sins and all their sorrows, the tears ran down her cheeks, for her heart yearned for these brothers and sisters of the human race. As she concluded, she presently added, "And let us pray." Each knee was bent. The sun had set in the far west, and the light day-gusts of wind had ceased to blow; the sea-bird had rested from its shrill cry, and the note of the sunny lark was likewise hushed, when, in the stillness of the eve, the voice of earnest, weeping entreaty ascended from the little circle, that knelt beside the lowly huts. Ethelda cried, and the Lord heard her, and in answer to her entreaty He delivered souls from death and prisoners from bonds. The result was unknown on earth. The heavenwards impression of the seal might have been read in the courts above—"The Lord knoweth them that are His:" but that, which was turned to earth, had yet to be manifested—"Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

There was one countenance, which looked wholly unmoved. It was that of a big girl, who seemed about sixteen. Whilst Ethelda read, she endeavoured to laugh and make jokes with a younger child, that was near her, and when the prayer was over she walked away, humming the tune of a

wild Irish air. Before the little meeting was broken up, Rowland repeated, line by line, the following simple verses, applicable alike to the babe in Christ, or to the dying believer,—

“Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
And that Thy blood was shed for me,
O Lamb of God, I come!”

The simple children of Erin listened to the words, and their voices rose in untaught melody to Him, whose praise the ocean was likewise unconsciously sounding in its ceaseless strain. Jesus rejoiceth more to hear the sinner's earnest cry than the archangel's loudest praise; and the Father watches with joy the prodigal's return, and when he is yet a long way off, he runneth to meet the son, “who was dead and is alive again, who was lost and is found.”

Before leaving, Ethelda gave to Patrick M'Gee a copy of the blessed word of God. The Irishman received it with many expressions of gratitude, and was well pleased when the young lady, with her pencil, wrote on the fly-leaf his name and her own.

In this first evening-gathering at the sand-huts, there was much to encourage the brother and sister. Hearts seemed to warm towards them, and the message of reconciliation, they were privileged to deliver, was cordially welcomed by these untaught, though nominal Christians.

“God has been far better to us than our fears,” said

Ethelda, as she and Rowland slowly ascended the sandy hill that led to a plateau of open country.

"Yes," replied Rowland: "I never thought, Ethie, that you would have got on so well."

"I own I limited God's power, for the interest the little assembly showed, was far more than I dared to expect. I trust that He, who has been so present with us at the commencement of our little labor of love, will enable us to continue and end it to His glory."

"Oh, yes," replied Rowland hopefully, "the beginning is the most difficult, and it has been excellent. I feel that more than half of our troubles are over now."

"I don't think that, Rowly. The shepherd will not bear back the sheep without the lion roaring after them. Satan will not lose a corner of his kingdom without a desperate struggle."

"That is not like you, Ethie, for you are always looking on the bright side."

"I don't anticipate disaster, I only expect a fight. Just as, notwithstanding the sun's splendid setting this evening, I think there are thunderclouds now spreading over the horizon. Forewarned, you know, Rowly, is forearmed. Consciousness of danger and consciousness of strength may exist in the same heart, for we know there is a stronger than the strong man armed."

"Well, I must say I am delighted with this evening's work. But now let us canter quickly, for fear of a dripping shower."

Jeanette and Dapple Grey needed little urging. They went quickly up the village and along the lane, and passed Dry Mill Gate. A little further on, lying below the hedge, was the drunken Ned Clark. Ethelda's horse suddenly started, and in one moment she was lying senseless on the side of the road.

* * * * *

"How late you are, Rowland! where is Ethie?" said Mr. Alleyne in a tone of sudden alarm, as he looked at his son, who, with a strong effort, retained the appearance of great composure.

"She's coming, father; but there has been a sad accident," and Rowland's voice trembled most painfully.

"Accident!—Ethelda!—hurt!—killed!"

"No, no, father; not killed. We trust in God's power to restore her; her horse started, and she has been thrown."

Poor Mr. Alleyne remained transfixed to his chair, his eyes fastened on Rowland, though, in reality, they neither read nor understood anything. Gertrude, who had returned home two days previously, wrung her hands with grief, and with a loud cry of "Ethie," she ran hastily to the hall. The carriage, which had been sent for, unknown to Mr. Alleyne, had driven up to the back-door, so that no unnecessary alarm might be felt by the

old gentleman. Three of the servants were now carrying with unwonted tenderness, the apparently lifeless form of their beloved Miss Alleyne. A blow on the head had produced concussion of the brain, and though life was not extinct, there was indeed cause for great anxiety. Messengers for medical men had been sent in different directions, and those around Ethelda's bed seemed to hang breathlessly on the report of Mr. Taylor, who was the first to arrive. It hardly sounded one note of hope, and poor Mr. Alleyne paced silently and fitfully between the library and the room of his beloved child. He looked on the countenance of each person that he met, but he did not speak a syllable. Rowland tried to whisper words of comfort, but they seemed only to die upon his lips. Gertrude wept all night, sometimes by her sister's bed, and sometimes beside the window, watching the bright lightning that, throughout its dark hours, illuminated the sky. Ethelda neither moved nor spoke, and it seemed sometimes difficult to believe that in that deathlike-looking frame the immortal spirit still abode.

The morning dawned, the clouds of night were all dispersed. Trees and herbs and flowers were refreshed; and, as a giant prepared to run his race, the sun was risen in renewed splendour. Old Mr. Alleyne, wearied with walking to and fro, and bowed down with anxious grief, had rested in his library chair, and for a short time had been overpowered with slumber. The slanting, morning

sunbeam, resting on his forehead, awoke him. There was at first an undefined consciousness of horror on his mind, then the feeling of the reality of his grief, and then the remembrance of the last night's scene. The short cessation of sorrow seemed only to have increased it tenfold, and in the bitterness of his feelings he wrung his hands, exclaiming, "Why, Almighty God, why,—oh why is my beloved Ethie smitten?" The sorrowful tears coursed down the old man's cheek, and he wept as in the days of childhood. For a time, he failed to realise his own great privilege of prayer. He bore his cross, instead of laying it at the feet of Jesus. He dwelt on the sickness of his child, but told not his sympathising Lord that she, whom He loved, was sick. A long time passed, but no one came near the sorrowing father in his solitary chamber. There was no change to report in the insensible form of Ethelda, and the father's tears had flowed until they were dried up again. At this time, there seemed to rest upon his lips the words, "Light is sown for the righteous." They were mechanically repeated again and again, and though they had not entered the heart, and had hardly reached the understanding, yet there was breathed in them a far-off sound of comfort.

Little Harry was now up. He had been told that Aunt Ethelda was very ill, and being somewhat left to himself, had wandered with an unusually slow and quiet step, through the half-opened door of the library. Mr.

Alleyne had not heard his noiseless tread, and he started as the little hands were laid upon his arm. He looked on him somewhat vacantly, whilst the soft voice of the child whispered, "Grandpapa, dear!"

Old Mr. Alleyne took the little one on his knee and stroked his flushed cheek. He was relieved, and the fountain of his tears was again opened. He bent over the child and wept.

"Grandpapa, why do you cry? Why is Auntie Ethie ill? I wish she wasn't."

"Why, Almighty God, oh why, is my Ethelda smitten?" was once more the bitter exclamation of the old man.

"Has God made Auntie Ethie ill, grandpapa?" inquired the little one, half inclined to cry also. "I thought it was the nasty, drunken man in the lane."

"God has allowed it, Harry," said his grandfather, sadly.

"Then if God made auntie ill, we must ask Him to make her well. Mustn't we, grandpapa?" The old man did not reply, but the child continued, "Grandpapa dear, mustn't we? Shall I ask God now?" and Mr. Alleyne passively let him clamber down from his knees, and the child knelt beside a chair, and with his little hands closed, and his large, blue eyes raised to heaven, he supplicated, "Great God, my Auntie Ethie is dreadfully hurt, do make her well again; don't let her die; don't take her away

from grandpapa or little Harry. Do make her well for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

The child arose, and returning to his grandfather, he looked at him with a brightening smile. "Now, grandpapa, I will go and ask how Auntie Ethie is, and see if God has not made her well."

"Very soon the little ministering infant returned. "Dear grandpapa, it's all right. Nurse says, Auntie Ethie has opened her eyes."

"Thank God!" ejaculated the old man, and Rowland, entering at that moment, confirmed the tidings, and supported his trembling father to their beloved Ethelda's room. She had again opened her eyes, and with a sweet smile she recognised her honoured parent.

"Thank God!" he again said, "truly light is sown for the righteous, yea for the undeserving;" and he watched his child for a little while, and then returned to his own room, and wept, because he had not believed, and rejoiced, because the mercy of the Lord had abounded over unbelief.

"'Trust,'" he exclaimed, referring to his once cherished wife, "were the last words of my own Ethelda, when she was taken; and 'Trust' seemed in the smile of her Ethelda, when she was restored. The little one says 'Trust,' and Thou, Almighty Father, sayest 'Trust.' O Lord, increase my faith, and may I become as a trusting little child, and enter the kingdom of heaven." Old Mr.

Alleyne's prayer was heard, and, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth unto Thee good," was ever after the language of his heart, the breathing of his soul.

The "Why, Almighty God?" was hushed, the mount of faith was climbed, and he ever continued there, holding converse with his God, till called higher up to the mount of Glory.

CHAPTER XV.

OLD MOSES AND LITTLE ADAH.

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem ! enthroned once on high,
Thou favoured home of God on earth, thou heaven below the sky,
Now brought to bondage with thy sons, a curse and grief to see,
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, our tears shall flow for thee."

HEBRE.

THE work at the huts was for a time suspended, as Rowland went abroad, and Ethelda was many weeks in regaining her former strength. And yet it was only man's work that was stayed—God's work could not be hindered. The seed had been cast on the waters, and it was springing up, the husbandman knew not how. Though no human hand watered or nurtured the same, God was watching and quickening it, and preparing it to accomplish that which He pleased. The grief of the poor people was great when they heard of Ethelda's sad accident ; and daily did Peter find his way up to the Hall, to inquire after the good young lady, and sometimes he carried sea-anemones, such as the young gentleman had sought, or a bouquet of the sweet dwarf-roses that abounded on the links, or sometimes a small basket filled

with the shrimps he had risen early to catch. When Ethelda knew of his visits, she would send out a little book or a hymn, and the cook was not unfrequently ordered to fill his basket with oatmeal, with vegetables, or with broken bread. Peter's father always greedily laid hold of the little book. He first read it to himself, then to his boy, and afterwards he sometimes read it to his neighbours. Ethelda's words had touched a chord in that poor Irishman's heart; they had directed him the road to heaven, and with the help of that word, which David experienced as a light unto his feet, he was following on to know the Lord.

"Peter lad, suppose we go to the church at Alleyne yonder this afternoon," he said to his son, some Sundays after the accident. "I would give something to see the young lady's face again, and I don't think there's no great harm in going, for I 'spect the place where they read this Holy Book is not so very unholy afther all."

"Ay, that'll be nice, father; the Book I'm sure is good, though they said it was bad: and, maybe, the place will be the very same."

"Ay, the milk is often said to be sour when it's not wanted to be drunken; but, lad, what for your jacket and shoes?"

"Well, father, I'll have mother sew this patch in again; and as for shoes, father, it isn't cold, and my feet will do."

"That's not bad thought of; but I fear the people will stare at you uncommon."

"I sha'n't look at all the eyes, father ; I shall just look at the lady's on the earth, and think of the great God's in the heavens ; and neither of them will think less of Peter, for he hasn't shoes."

And so Peter and his father found their way to God's holy house. They heard His word—they received it as those who find great spoil. "The sheep that was lost," formed the subject of that afternoon's sermon ; and on the two following Sundays the minister said he would speak of the sheep that was sought and the sheep that was found. Though neither Peter nor his father could see Ethelda, they had not attended God's house in vain : they felt that the clergyman spoke of themselves ; they felt a longing to hear about the seeking of the lost ; they rejoiced in what they heard, and they determined to go again on the following Sunday.

Two more Sundays passed, and Peter, to his great joy, observed his dear young lady come into church, leaning on her venerable parent. She looked pale and weak, but the Irish boy thought her more beautiful than ever ; and she saw him in the porch as she passed out, and told him to call at Alleyne on the morrow. And in her turn Ethelda was well pleased to find how greatly increased was Peter's biblical knowledge, how readily and simply he explained the gospel message, how firmly he believed in the Shepherd's care for the wandering sheep, and how well he could narrate the relations of the Saviour's life and death. She thanked her God, and took courage, and in her beautiful little apartment,

on her soft Turkey carpet, the very contrast of poor Peter's hut, she and the boy knelt, and prayed to their one Father, who is in heaven. She told Peter that she was going from home for some weeks, but sent him to Edward Arnold's, that he might be measured for a church-going pair of shoes, and she felt assured that Edward and her favourite Peter would soon become true and steady friends.

* * * * *

A few days more and Mr. Alleyne and his family were in the Highlands of Scotland, enjoying the fresh mountain air, and delighting in the picturesque scenery. Standing on the deck of the small steamer that conveyed them to the Isle of Arran, they observed near them an old, greyhaired man, whose long white beard, aquiline nose, and quick dark eye, seemed to mark him of the royal race of Israel. A beautiful black-eyed child stood beside him. She was watching with her grandsire the steamboat's approach to the rocky mountains of that island, and observing the waves as they gently rolled round and beneath the vessel. One billow, rather larger than the other, throwing down the little one upon the deck, Ethelda, who was standing near, raised the child. She soon soothed her cries, and little Harry put in her hand some of the grapes, which remained from the bunch that he had been eating. The child looked pleased, but her grandfather, though he bowed, and very politely expressed his thanks, drew the little Adah to himself, and

by his manner betokened a wish for no farther notice of him or of his young charge. Harry did not understand this. The beautiful child held under her arm a small Scotch terrier, and the dog's funny face, hidden beneath its long silky hair, and the child's bright and coyish smiles, attracted little Harry till he pulled Boosa to stand with him very near the Jewish girl; then, whispering rather shyly, "May I touch it?" he placed his hand over its head, and pretended to jump away as the animal put out its tongue, to show its appreciation of the young master's notice. Adah laughed at Harry's fears, and putting her own little hand forward, caressed the pretty plaything, calling, "Skye, Skye, Skye!"

"Skye!" said Harry; "why do you call it that? Dogs don't come from the sky."

"Did you never hear that it sometimes rains cats and dogs?" said a gentleman, who, standing near, had been amused with Harry's exclamation.

Harry turned round and looked at him very earnestly.

"I never saw it rain cats and dogs; does it?"

"To be sure, very often,—as long as my arm sometimes."

"And did this doggie, this dear little thing, come from the sky?" said Harry, looking first at the gentleman, and then at Adah. "I wish it would rain cats and dogs now."

The gentleman laughed at the little child's earnestness and turned away, but Harry evidently was perplexed. Aunt Ethelda was not near, to ask if it were quite true, and

Boosa was not the person for appeal. Turning to Adah, he inquired,—

“Did *you* see it come from the sky?”

“No,” replied Adah, “and I do not think it did. Did it, grandfather?” she inquired, rather timidly, of the aged man.

“No, my child; the gentleman was only using a common saying when it rains violently. There is an island, not very far hence, where mountains like those before us may be descried. These dogs come from thence. It is called Skye, and so your favourite has received the name of its birth-place.”

“Why was not I called Jerusalem, then, grandfather, the name of my birthplace?”

“It is not a name fit for girls; but mayest thou, my child, be called by its new name, ‘Hephzibah,’ for the Lord shall yet delight in her.”

“Were you born,” asked Harry gently, “at the Jerusalem that Auntie Ethie tells us about out of the Bible? I want to be a traveller, and go and see Jerusalem. I love it so.”

“Why?” the old Israelite, somewhat sternly, inquired of the Christian child.

“Because God loves it, you know.”

“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of my fathers, bless thee, my child!” and he turned away his head, and once more intently watched the approaching island.

Very beautiful was the scene. The sun was setting behind its pointed heights, touching a little spot here and there with its burnished gold, and causing by contrast a deeper shade to rest on the eastern side of the hills. The Bay of Brodick, which they were entering, was calm and undisturbed; the sea-weed seemed to wave like a field of grass far beneath its clear, transparent water; the fishermen's little huts, which encircled the shore, looked bright, contrasting with the dark woods of the castle. Far away on the other side were seen the shores of Ayrshire, bathed in the glorious light of the last sunbeams of evening. Ethelda, and her father, and Rowland observed it also, and Ethie's eyes were full of tears, because of the loveliness of the landscape.

Little Harry, who, with Boosa, had found his way round to the part of the ship where his aunt stood, soon, however, broke her reverie by exclaiming, "We are just going to stop, auntie, and the little girl has got such a pretty dog, and they call it Skye. Can you guess why?" added the little fellow, very archly; and without waiting for an answer he told all about it, and also how the pretty Adah was born in Jerusalem.

The steamer was now stopped; the luggage was placed in one boat, the passengers in another; and as the little barque neared the shore, Ethelda was rather disappointed to see that their Jewish acquaintances were gone forward in the steamboat. They were parted for a time, but Harry's simple love for Jerusalem had struck a chord in the old

man's heart; it had done more to remove his prejudices against Christianity than all the intercourse of nearly four-score years.

"I love that Christian child," he several times muttered; and then, as if astonished that he used such words, he would add, "I don't know why, but I cannot help it."

Rabbi Moses was a Jew of a highly respectable family, that had lived for many years in Hungary. In early life he had settled in England, where he had continued, excepting during occasional visits to the Holy Land. Strongly prejudiced against Christianity, he had become tenfold more incensed, owing to the conversion to that faith of his once favourite daughter Naomi, and the strong inclination to embrace its tenets shown by his only remaining child, the mother of the beautiful Adah. She was left a widow in the Holy Land, when her little daughter was but a few months old. She had passed through many trials, and, from her husband's relatives, had experienced many of the hard things of this world. With fond hopes blighted, early expectations crossed, and youth's affections snapped asunder, Salome had returned in widowhood's sorrow to the home of her childhood. It was changed, and she was changed. The gay, mirth-loving child, had become the widow who had seen affliction. Her favourite sister, the thoughtful Naomi, had been driven an exile from her father's house, and the old man dwelt in wrathful grief, hardening his heart more and more against the one Name, that could have brought consolation. Not so Salome. Trials had been to her as the

ploughshare, which prepared the ground for the seed of Divine truth, or as the pruning-knife, which fitted the plant for the new graft. Salome's tempest-tossed soul longed for a refuge to flee unto; her broken heart had need of a physician to heal. She had heard a little of Him, who said, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest;" and she longed to know whether Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Messiah that should come into the world. The aged Rabbi strictly prevented all intercourse between the sisters, and anxiously watched that Salome should form no friendship with those who love the name of Christ.

God purposed, and man could not hinder. He designed, and no one could frustrate.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ROCKY GLEN.

Oh! Child of grief, why weepest thou?
Why droops thy sad and mournful brow?
Why is thy look so like despair?
What deep, sad sorrow, lingers there?

In all the varying scenes of woe—
The lot of fallen man below,
Still lift thy tearful eye above,
And hope in God, for 'God is love!'

Nor far from the village of Brodick, in the Island of Arran, the inland hills project, and on either side lie picturesque valleys, with the clear mountain-stream gurgling along. At the foot of the mountain, where the valley divides, stands a farm-house, decidedly not of large dimensions, but, attracted by the loveliness and quietude of its situation, this, for a time, became the abode of the Alleynes.

It was on a sunny morning, not long after their arrival, that Harry played beside the little rivulet, "pretending a feast," making the sea-side shells his dishes, choosing the red pebbles for ham and salt beef, the brown ones for roast joints, cutting up sorrel leaves for salad, and ornamenting

the whole with the purple heather, the yellow tormentilla, or the blue milkwort. Boosa stood beside him, and not far off, under the shade of the few scant trees that grew, Ethelda sat and read. Some Highland women were washing clothes a hundred yards down the stream; two were rinsing them in the clear water of the brook, one was throwing a piece of peat on the fire, and another was carrying water to fill the large kettle, which hung on a bar, made to rest on two huge stones, which were seemingly placed for that very purpose. At this moment, a little island car drove up to the spot, and a gentle voice inquired if one could drive further up the glen.

"Nae, ma'am, I fear ye canna; but it is pretty gude walking for a long way ayont that wall," pointing to a disused sheep-fold of stones, loosely placed one upon another.

"Shall we alight, father? do you think we could saunter a little way up the valley? The scenery is wildly beautiful, and will no doubt improve as we ascend."

"Yes, my child, get down; I will go as far as I can. I wish that either Adah or I could walk with you to the head of the glen."

So saying, the old man with some difficulty alighted, and the island charioteer lifted down little Adah, who ran forward with the quick step of childhood. Suddenly she saw before her little Harry, and his black attendant, and the tiny feast outspread; she immediately ran with a beaming, joyous countenance, to her mother.

"Mother, that's the little boy in the steamboat, and his black servant."

She need not say more, for her mother knew all she did about Harry and Boosa.

Having recognised Adah, he, tossing down green plates and pebble joints, ran to the road along which they were walking. There he turned shy, and so did Adah, and they would have passed each other with only timid glances, had Adah's mamma not accosted the little boy, and referred, in a kind tone, to the steamboat voyage. Ethelda, perceiving the strangers, joined the group, and endeavoured to give the information concerning the glen that was required.

"My brother has gone to-day to sketch a little brawling cascade, that comes tumbling down the mountain-side. It is but a short distance. I can go so far with you, and from that point show you the way."

"Thank you much," said the old man; "but the road looks rough. If you please, I will allow my daughter to accompany you, whilst I and the child remain here. Salome, you will enjoy this rugged valley."

"It promises intense wildness, and that I admire more than the plenteous, peaceful vales of England."

"Do you?" said Ethelda inquiringly, and leaving the old Rabbi and the little children, she and Salome proceeded on their way.

The old man felt that day very feeble. This accounted for his willingness to allow Salome to accompany the kind stranger, whilst he was pleased himself to sit down under

the dwarfish trees, where Elhelda had been resting. Her book was laid upon the grass, and old Moses, prompted partially by curiosity, took it up, and as his eye was not dim, commenced its perusal. It was a Christian pastor's travels in the land of Israël. It was written by one who loved the children of Judah. His interest was deeply engaged, and when he had read many pages of it he closed the volume, and a long and gloomy train of thought followed. "The promised seed disinherited of the promised land—Jerusalem trodden by the Gentiles—Palestine no longer the garden of the Lord—the land which Jehovah blessed given unto strangers—our people despised—our city contemned;" but at that moment, raising his eye, he saw the blue-eyed Christian child gambolling with his Adah. He was silent for a little while, and then, as if a sunbeam burst upon the gloominess, "No, not always contemned; that little one loves our city, and knows that God loves it. Yes—Thou God of glorious majesty—Thou art Jehovah, who changest not; Thou hast engraven Jerusalem on the palms of Thy hand; let our city be no longer called 'Desolate,' nor our land, 'Forsaken.' Wherefore? oh! wherefore hast Thou cast us off? What is our sin, and the sin of our forefathers?"

Just then little Adah came running towards her venerable parent: she observed the tears that ran down his cheeks, and staying her play, she climbed upon his knee, and soothingly took her tiny pocket-handkerchief, to wipe the same away.

Harry came too, and stood near. His face, with a very concerned expression, looked earnestly at the old man; but, as if unable to solve the mystery, he advanced nearer and nearer, till, laying his little hands in the trembling ones of the Rabbi, he said, "Why do you cry, grandpapa?" for so Adah called him. "What makes you so sad? Shall I go and tell my grandpapa to come?"

"No, my son, no. Leave a poor old man to himself. He cannot stop his tears, and no hand can wipe them away."

"But God can," said Harry earnestly; "He says He will wipe all tears from our eyes."

"Poor Christian child!" said the Rabbi, stroking compassionately the fair hair of Harry. "Hast thou to remind an Israelite of the promises made to his forefathers? Go again to thy play, my child, and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob bless thee!"

Harry did not comprehend all this, but with the inconstancy of childhood he turned to his little companion, "Now, Adah, grandpapa is better, come, come away; I want to show you where I have a hairy caterpillar: it is such a beautiful thing." Adah lingered one minute longer to receive a kiss from her grandsire, and then the little hands were placed one in the other, as they ran towards the clear brook.

And as the children played, and the old man mused, the widowed Salome and Ethelda walked up the rugged valley.

"Is that dear child your only one?" asked Ethelda, after a little conversation.

"Yes; my married days were very few. My Adah was only four months old when my husband died, and I was left friendless in a stranger land, for the land of my forefathers is not the country of my home. I was very desolate, and still am desolate, for my sorrows are those with which a stranger intermeddleth not."

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee," replied Ethelda, in the language of the Psalmist. "*He* hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."

"Ah! but God has afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger. He has chastised me, and as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke I have rebelled."

"And you are weary of your rebellion, and feel the yoke a heavy burden?" said Ethelda, in a tone of earnest sympathy.

"Yes," replied Salome, "I am weary, very weary. This rugged valley seems an apt illustration of the place of my sojourn, and it is hemmed in on every side; there is no way of escape."

"Lot was told to flee unto the mountains, lest he should be consumed."

"Yes, but I know not where to flee. On the right hand is an angry God, on the left hand is a consuming fire. I know that I have made God angry; that He is not my friend; that He hath destroyed me on every side, and removed my hope like a tree. I long for some one to plead

for me with God ; but there is no one. I long for a guide to lead me to the everlasting hills, but in the inmost feelings of my soul, I am altogether alone."

"I could tell you," Ethelda earnestly replied, "of One who is a covert from the storm ; who never said, 'Seek ye me in vain.' He once spoke to the sorrowful, and said, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

"Do tell me who said that ?" said Salome inquiringly.

"It was the Lord Jesus Christ," replied Ethelda, inwardly praying that that Name might become precious unto the sorrowing daughter of Abraham.

"I thought so. It is some months since, I was walking on a Sunday along a lane near home and picked up a bright, little, yellow ticket, which some school child had dropped, and those words were printed on it. I felt as if they were written for me, but I dare not inquire concerning them. My sister is a Christian, and my father is very much afraid lest I hear anything of your religion. Yet I am weary and heavy laden, and I long to know if Jesus can really give me rest."

As she said this, they had reached the low, loose stone wall, and somewhat tired, she rested on it, her beautiful dark eyes raised to Ethelda with earnest inquiry. "He has given me rest," Ethelda replied, "and many, many others, and can indeed give you rest, if you ask."

"But then I don't believe in Him. I have read the Gospel (I think you call it) of Luke long ago. I liked His

character. I sympathised in His hard fate; but I did not believe the story of the resurrection, and cannot persuade myself that the Messiah should die."

"Isaiah says, 'The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;' and Daniel, that 'the Messiah should be cut off, but not for Himself.' Now put these two things together; and from your own prophets may you not know that, because 'He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities,' therefore the Prince of life was killed?"

"But the Messiah was to come and restore all things. He was to sit on the throne of David and give back the kingdom to poor, despised Israel."

"And so He will. He shall come again with glory; and His feet shall stand on Mount Olivet. He shall deliver Israel, and Judah shall again be pre-eminent among the nations of the earth. I believe this; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it."

"Then you don't despise Israel?" said Salome, looking hopefully at Ethelda.

"My Saviour was a Jew; and he loved even those who crucified Him."

"Perhaps He loves me," thought Salome, and as she and Ethelda proceeded up the valley and talked of the Messiah in His humility, and the Messiah in His glory, her heart warmed more and more towards Jesus of Nazareth, and the conviction grew upon her understanding that this was, indeed, the Saviour that should come into the world.

They watched, too, the steamer from Crinan, which they expected would bring Gertrude, who was on that afternoon to join their little party. Soon the line of dark smoke was observed among those little islets, which, so far as the eye could reach, appeared one beyond the other, steadfast amid the surrounding foam. And onward came the smoking boat, lurching and rolling, and yet making steady progress; and now the revolution of the paddle-wheels can be observed, and the steam is being blown off, and the vessel stops at the primitive pier.

Gertrude was under the care of Mrs. Maitland, a sister of Sir Claude Wentworth, who, with her husband, was proceeding north to Bonaire. The rough sea had, however, determined the whole party to land, and very pleasant were the greetings.

A large number of friends were thus assembled round Mr. Alleyne's tea-table that evening; and with appetites sharpened by the sea-voyage, mutton chops, Loch-Fyne her-ring, bacon and eggs, oatcake and all the other etceteras of a Scotch meal, rapidly disappeared. It was a very cheerful repast, for never are friends and acquaintances so cordial as when they meet somewhat unexpectedly a few hundred miles from home.

"Were there many passengers on board?" inquired Mr. Alleyne.

"O, yes!" said Mrs. Maitland—"quite enough, I can assure you. I was almost suffocated in the cabin when the showers came on: and some of the passengers were half dead

with sea-sickness. Nothing on earth will tempt me to return by sea."

"Then you are not inclined for Staffa and Iona, I suppose?"

"Oh, no! I have had quite enough of it to-day. I shall be quite content to hear what others say. I decidedly prefer your tea-table, Mr. Alleyne, to those in the Iona's saloons."

"I have a much more comfortable one at Alleyne," replied the old gentleman dryly.

"Ah! but where is the sunset of this evening?" said Sir Claude: "I never saw anything more splendid—so angry—so stormy—so brilliant—dipping below the sea, and setting it all on fire."

"Yes! it was quite the thing for a picture," said Mrs. Maitland; "but, I think, considering all the concomitant circumstances, I should prefer it in a picture-gallery. It will be very pleasant to talk of, however; and there certainly was plenty of material for pencil studies. You observed, Claude, that beautiful group near us—the old grey-bearded man, his widowed daughter, and the pretty black-eyed child."

"I could not help it. They were fit portraits for the foreground of such a scene."

"Did they land?" inquired Ethelda, rather anxiously.

"I don't know; I didn't observe," replied Sir Claude.

"I think that they went forward. Henrietta, do you know?"

"Indeed, I don't. I only thought of 'Number One' in landing, I assure you. It always makes me so very nervous, and they were not a family I could ask to sit for their portraits."

"No," replied her brother; "there was too much dignity about the old man for that; and yet he looked so very sorrowful, I could not help compassionating him. He had a long white beard, and the whole family had a very Jewish physiognomy."

"They must be your friends, Ethie," said Mr. Alleyne.

"Yes; we met them in the Isle of Arran: I should like much to meet them again. How did the widow look?"

"Extremely delicate. I fancied they were travelling for her health. The little girl and I became rather friendly—at least, I threw down some bits of meat to her dog."

"Our acquaintance commenced through the dog also," said Ethie; and then she related some particulars of the Jewish family, in which even Mrs. Maitland was interested.

The following day was dark and gloomy, and before breakfast was finished, the rain beat pitilessly against the windows, wholly regardless of the party within, who had left their comfortable mansions in England to see the lakes, the islands, and the mountains of old Caledonia.

"I never saw anything so provoking," said Mrs. Maitland. "Really I do think we are the most unfortunate people upon earth."

"Etta," said Sir Claude, "just come and stand here for a little while;" and he made room for his sister beside the window, where he and Gertrude were observing the weather.

At a short distance were sailors, hauling on shore a boat, which was quite beyond the power of the unsuccessful fishermen, who had evidently been out all night. Nearer were a few nearly naked children, carrying water from a well, and passing by at that moment was a comely-looking woman, holding an umbrella, it was true, but wearing neither bonnet nor shoes.

"With which of those parties would the 'most unfortunate person in the world' like to change places?" Sir Claude inquired with a smile.

"O Claude! you always take me up so; you know I did not mean that."

"I do think," said Gertrude, "that they are better off than we are, though I don't wish to change places."

"An explanation, madam," said Sir Claude, pleasantly.

"They have something to do, and we have nothing."

"A remedy for that," he replied, and quickly left the room.

"What does Claude mean?" said Mrs. Maitland, as they watched him go down the street. And soon he re-

turned, carrying over his shoulder a large, brown-paper parcel.

"What are you bringing that huge wet thing in here for?" inquired Mrs. Maitland, as her brother entered the room.

"Plenty of work for those who have nothing to do;" and he laid down before them a quantity of thick, blue flannel.

"And whatever can we do with this?" said Mrs. Maitland, despairingly.

"Surely a woman knows?"

"Yes; I know," said Gertrude; "but I don't know how."

"Nor I," said Sir Claude; "but I am certain Miss Alleyne can put you right."

"Oh, yes! Ethie knows everything." And Gertrude soon found her sister, who thanked Sir Claude heartily for the purchase, and quickly prepared the work. Mrs. Maitland did not find the morning so long as she had expected.

In the evening it cleared a little, and some of the party determined to explore the road to Dunstaffnage Castle. They reached the old ruin, and climbed along the walls within which the kings of Scotland once abode, and whence the celebrated Coronation-stone in Westminster Abbey was transported. There were now few remains of its former greatness, no appearance of royalty, no mark of ornament. A brackish marsh surrounded it on one side,

and weeds grew amid its stones. But the scenery was still magnificent,—below it lay Loch Etive, yet foaming with the strong wind of the morning, and beyond were the lofty heights of Appin and Barcaldine, yet capped with the dark clouds, which still lingered over the land, that they had so plentifully watered. The deep waters of the yet more turbulent Loch Linnhe stretched to the north and west, and on its further side rose the strong outline of the mountains of Mull. All was dark, foaming, turbulent, and seemed in unison with the decay of the royal palace, with the passing away of earthly greatness. It was felt that over the dying dynasties of earth, He is immeasurably exalted who sitteth upon the water-floods, and maketh the clouds His chariot, and rideth upon the wings of the wind.

“I am glad we walked here this evening, but I should not like to live always amid this scenery,” Ethelda remarked to Sir Claude, as they walked homewards.

“Is it too wild and desolate for your taste?” he inquired.

“Yes, it rather oppresses the mind. It is magnificent. It speaks of power. It seems to echo loudly, God is great. But one misses the still small voice, God is good.”

“Do you not think that is owing to our seeing it on a stormy, cloudy day?”

“No doubt, in measure. When the sea is calm, and the sun shines brightly, or when moonbeams play over the

clear, sleeping waters, it must be very lovely,—but still the trees, the verdure, the rich luxuriance of dear old England, I miss.”

“I must differ from you for once. Were I a Scotchman, I think I should miss tenfold more the rugged mountain outline, the stern wild coast——”

“You would miss the thistle, then. I miss the rose.”

“Hardly that,” he said, slowly. “Can that be compared to the thistle?” and they both involuntarily stopped to gaze upon the scene before them, as the bright young moon shone out through an opening in the clouds, and gave life to the dark shores of Kerrera, and made the waves sparkle again beneath its brilliancy.

“You are right, Sir Claude; Love is written in the works which tell our Heavenly Father’s greatness, as well as on those which more especially mark His sympathy. I do admire this. Yet as a home, I still prefer the peaceful and luxuriant vales of dear England.”

“Truly, *I* do not wish to live on this bleak heather,” answered Sir Claude, shrugging his shoulders, “but I can imagine well the Highlander’s fondness for home.”

At this moment they passed a wayside cottage, at the door of which was an elderly woman carrying in clods of peat for the little fire. The rain had again commenced to fall, and the strangers rather halting, she, with native hospitality, and with gentle Highland accent, accosted them,—

"A soft evening this; ye'll walk into the little cottage, and shelter a little?"

Ethelda and Sir Claude readily complied, Gertrude and Rowland following them.

"I fear ye'll not find it very commodious, but if ye dinna mind it for a little, the showers will soon be past;" and stirring the peat fire, she looked at Ethelda, and said, "Now won't the dearie young ladye come here, for she looks but delicate?" Ethelda, going forward, observed in the shade a modest, pretty-looking girl of sixteen or upwards.

"Is this your daughter?" she inquired.

"Yes, ma'am; Sally, come forward and speak to the ladies and gentlemen."

Sally blushing advanced. "Ye've found me quite in deshabelle* this evening, ladies; but I had to feed the chickens and the pigs, and the evening was so bleak like."

"Oh, never mind," said Miss Alleyne. "I fear we may be intruders at this late hour; but we are only here for a few days, and we wished to see much of your beautiful scenery."

"Ah, that is a pity now!" exclaimed the widow; "and this day has been so stormy. The scenery is very romantic. Here is a way up that hill which gives you such a grand view. If Duncan had been here, he might have taken you. You see far away across the heather to the east, and then

* This word is frequently used among the Highlanders.

adown the bay, and up the loch, and all the wee islands. Them that are farthest away just look like specks, and the near ones are so fair like, so steady like, just like a promise from the Father in heaven, when we are in great trouble."

"We don't know how precious and steadfast those promises are," remarked Ethelda, "till the billows round us roll."

"True, ladye; nor can we see them, till we are on the high land of faith. That thought just came across me the other day."

"Yes, we must mount high before things, which are far off, can be descried."

"Ay, it's just exactly so. Nature is full of preachings for us, if we would but learn them."

"Would you tell us some of the preachings that you have observed?" said Sir Claude.

"There are many of them; but you know, sir, if you go out near to the midnight, you dinna hear a sound; the birds are all as silent as can be. Then if you go out about twa in the morning, they begin to sing, jist a note here and there—they never take a sup nor a bite, but they sing first. Is not that a preaching for us? Then if ye go into the wood, and see how the grass grows—twa blades with a green leaf round them, one big and the other little, yet they never quarrel. Is not that a preaching for us? Oh, sir, if we do but read it, God's word and God's world give us the same preachings!"

"Nor need we wonder; the hand that worked the one is the same that wrote the other. How strange it is that, believing this, we do not trust it more, for the same hand is tracing now, as on a chart, the life of each of us!"

"True, sir, and making a book of it, which also will be full of teachings; but we must be beyond the clouds when we read that Book—it will not be finished, till the Mount is climbed and the journey is over."

"Do you know these beautiful lines?" said Ethelda, addressing the old woman:—

'When we stand with Christ in glory,
Looking o'er life's finished story,
Then, Lord, shall we fully know,
Not till then, how much we owe.'

"Ay, true, ma'am, we don't know it yet. The only things, that outnumber our debts, are our God's mercies. I have many of them, both temporal and spiritual. Here's this nice bit cottage, and my Sally there, and two as bonnie boys as ever the sun shone on; they are both at sea, Donald is in the Queen's navy, and Duncan goes in a boat down the coasts there; they are both uncommon gude." Then turning to Sally she spoke in Gaelic, and Sally soon brought little treasures—shells and other things that her brother had got by dredging in the deep waters. "The captain is awfu' fond of curiosities, and he likes Donald well, and lets him have these things. Will ye have this for a remembrance, ladye? I often give them to my friends."

"Thank you very much," replied Ethelda; "I will take it a long way with me, for my home is in England."

"Oh! do ye come from England? I have many dearie friends in London. There's a Bible there—Sally, can you bring it down? It was given me by one of the Peers of England—the Lord Mayor of London. Do ye know him, ma'am?"

"No, I don't live near London."

"He was such a nice man, ma'am. There were three gentlemen travellers. One was the Lord Mayor, and another was another Peer, Lord C—— they called him, and they gave us this before they went away. Oh! we have many dearie friends in England."

"And you must add us to your list of dear friends, will you?" said Ethelda, shaking hands with Widow M'Leod, and expressing a hope of seeing her again.

"That we will, and may God bless you both, and make you long happy together, and bless all of you," she added, turning to the young countenances of Gertrude and Rowland.

"Thank you, Widow M'Leod; may your prayers be answered," added Sir Claude, earnestly, and taking Ethelda under the shelter of his umbrella, with some difficulty the little party reached their Highland lodging.

"What a charmingly simple-minded, intelligent old woman!" thought Sir Claude. "I must bear in mind that God is making a book of my mountain journey, a book of parallel columns, recounting my wanderings and His long-

sufferings. The simple cottager knows the lesson that to me once was difficult, but now is plain. The story of the world, of life, of the word,—of creation, of providence, and of grace,—are alike written by the finger of God, the finger of Almighty Love. Lord, open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things in Thy threefold revelation.”

It was agreed that the work of the rainy morning should supply the wants of those who sheltered them on the rainy evening; and though the days to be spent at Oban were very few, Gertrude and Harry found a morning to revisit Widow M'Leod, and to supply her with clothes, which during the cold winter days of that northern latitude, would make her gratefully remember these “dearie” English friends.

CHAPTER XIX.

STAFFA AND IONA.

“The pillar’d vestibule,
Expanding, yet precise, the roof embow’d
Might seem design’d to humble man, when proud
Of his best workmanship by plan and tool.
Down bearing with his whole Atlantic weight
Of tide and tempest on the structure’s base,
And flashing to that structure’s topmost height
Ocean has proved its strength, and of its grace
In calms is conscious, finding for its freight
Of softest music some responsive place.”

WORDSWORTH.

A DAY neither bright nor dull passed, and then there dawned one of the most lovely of autumnal mornings. There was a certain chilliness in the air, and the ground felt almost crisp with the slight frost of the preceding night, but the sky was a beautiful canopy of azure, and the few floating clouds in the east were tinged with rapidly-fading gold, the prelude of the sun’s yet more brilliant appearance. It was scarcely risen, when the steamboat’s bell was heard hastening the various passengers for Staffa and Iona to the little quayside of Oban. Among the last to arrive

was the Alleyne party; Mrs. Maitland, who did venture again into a steamboat, having very nearly caused all to be too late.

The boat was hardly started, when she begged her brother to take down a basket, and place it in a corner of the saloon with special care. Sir Claude rather reluctantly complied, for the sun was at that moment appearing in its full glory in the east, and forming a golden pathway across the smooth waters of the bay. In the saloon he was much surprised to find the Jewish family, who had previously been for a short time his fellow-travellers. The widow was suffering from a severe fit of coughing, the keen morning air having been too strong for her delicate chest. Sir Claude procured for her a glass of water, which was thankfully accepted, and he remained a few minutes, because he saw that the old Rabbi and the little child were alike unable to help the sufferer. The cough was partially relieved, and old Moses seemed inclined to speak to the stranger more than was his wont. He made several inquiries concerning the islands, whither they were steaming; and after some observations about the royal burial-ground, which they expected to visit, so strangely situated among the desolate rocks of that western ocean,—

“It is,” said the Jew, “an emblem of my desolate nation,—once a living royalty, now the sepulchres of the dead.”

“But thy dead men shall live,” answered Sir Claude; “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, the

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the God of their seed to everlasting generations."

"Then, why are we now forsaken? What is our sin that we have abode so many days without a prince, without a priest, without a temple?"

"Because you have rejected Him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write: 'He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.'"

"You are a Christian, I suppose, sir?"

"Thank God, I am; it is not long since I was an unbeliever."

Never since the evening on which Salome had acknowledged her faith in the crucified Son of God, had the old Rabbi made any allusion to the subject. He had never spoken to her an unkind word, but he had often passed the whole day without words at all. He was bowed down with grief. He frequently refused to eat of the meal that was spread, or partook of it without any pleasure. Adah's childish prattle seemed irksome to him; and when he stroked her head, the blessing of the Almighty God of her fathers was never invoked. He watched Salome with solicitude; and as each day she seemed paler and weaker, and her cough became more frequent, the despair of the old man increased, and it appeared, indeed, as if his grey hairs were going down with sorrow to the grave. Yet he longed to talk about Christianity to some one. He wished to know what there could be in the religion of "the carpenter's son," to influence his beloved daughter; he wished to hear the

arguments of a believer in Jesus Christ, to ponder them, to gainsay them, and then triumphantly to expose to his Salome the worthlessness of Christianity. Salome longed for her father again to speak on the subject, so near their hearts. Again and again, she sought to commence the conversation herself, but he always silenced her. He wished to try his weapons before he sought to confront her. He would essay to conquer the stranger first, and then would turn the steel against the unbelief of his child.

Leaving Adah in the saloon with her mother, the aged Israelite accompanied Sir Claude on deck, and was conducted by him to the most sheltered part of the vessel. There he wrapped his cloak carefully round the old man, who seemed pleased that he should sit beside him, and soon recommenced the conversation that had been broken off in the saloon.

They spent a long time in earnest discussion. The Rabbi was most anxious, for his daughter's sake, to discover the weak points in the Christian's argument, and Sir Claude, knowing the preciousness of the Saviour whom he had found, felt equally anxious that the son of Israel might be convinced that the Messiah had already come.

In some questions connected with Jewish history, and even with the writings of the prophets, Sir Claude was at fault. He was not a learned theologian, he was not deeply read in Scripture. But when the Rabbi spoke of sacrifices, Sir Claude felt as a giant upon his own ground;—the blood of bulls and goats, he laboured to prove, could not take

away sin; they must typify something far greater, the blood of the Incarnate Son of God, who suffered as a lamb without blemish and without spot. As they were discoursing, the breakfast-bell rang, and the passengers all hastened down to their early morning repast. Sir Claude and Rabbi Moses were too intently interested for either to hear the sound or to observe the movement, and they were not sought for,—the Alleyne party supposing that Sir Claude had been detained down-stairs. As they entered the saloon, Ethelda immediately perceived Salome and her little Adah. The colour quickly mounted into the widow's cheek, and through her tearful eye, there beamed a look of pleasure which could not be mistaken. As Ethelda passed, for the seats on either side of Salome were engaged, she pressed her hand and whispered, "Is all well?"

"All is well," answered the widow's trembling voice, as she turned her head away to hide the tear, that would escape.

Salome watched anxiously for her father, but neither he nor the young gentleman who had accompanied him appeared. She sent Adah to inquire of Miss Alleyne if she had seen "grandpapa," and was rendered still more anxious by her answer in the negative. And yet, what could have become of him? It seemed impossible that unobserved harm could have happened. The Alleynes likewise could not understand Sir Claude's prolonged absence, and Gertrude and little Harry volunteered a deck expedition in search of him.

Very soon the little boy observed him with his venerable friend. "There he is!" said Harry, "and Rabbi Moses too!" and leaving go of Gertrude's hand, he suddenly stood beside them. The Rabbi looked as if a spirit had appeared. Little Harry had been frequently in his thoughts, and still more continually in his dreams. Sometimes he fancied that Salome's apostasy was a curse for his love of the Christian child; but now that he saw the beautiful boy before him, with all his native grace and winning childishness, he found that he did not love him less, and he thought of his first sweet words, "I love Jerusalem, because God loves it."

"Whence have you come, my son?" and he laid his hands upon the child's auburn locks.

"We are all down-stairs, getting our breakfast;" and then, as if the old man was to be as much surprised as he had been, he continued, "and—Adah is there too."

"Do you remember Adah?"

"Yes, I never forget Adah—can I help you?" and the little one put out his tiny hand, supposing that it had power to support the tottering feet of age.

"I will help, Harry," said Sir Claude. "Run on before, little man."

The child was himself helped down-stairs by Gertrude, and Sir Claude, turning to the Rabbi, said, "That little one was the first to teach me the value of the Saviour's blood; but these things are hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes."

"Pardon me; *your* faith is only fit for babes."

"So said our Divine Master, 'Except ye become as little children, ye shall in nowise enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

Sir Claude now brought the Rabbi carefully down-stairs, and placing him in the only vacant chair, sat down on little Harry's seat, taking the child upon his knee. Ethelda saw in a moment what had been the occupation of Sir Claude, and she was well pleased to think that he was seeking to place the aged Israelitish-wanderer on the Rock of Ages,—to bring him, ere his pilgrimage was closed, to the true Mount Zion, the city of the living God.

Little Harry had heard his aunt talk much about Rabbi Moses not believing in Jesus, and each night in his infant supplication he had prayed, "And do make Rabbi Moses love his own Jesus Christ."

"Why do you say, 'his own?'" inquired his aunt one night.

"Because you know Jesus Christ was his own; He was a Jew, too."

That morning, at breakfast, Harry was evidently thinking of something different to the bread, and milk, and other things which were before him. Excepting the Rabbi, who ate very slowly, and Sir Claude and the child, all of the party had left the breakfast-table.

The Rabbi was somewhat troubled on again seeing the Alleynes, but the meeting was now unavoidable. It seemed fated that their paths should often cross each other, and

the little vexation fell lightly on his oppressed spirit. His mind was absorbed with his conversation with Sir Claude, and he was rejoicing in the hope of now knowing how and where to combat Salome.

Little Harry came timidly round, and said very gently to the old Rabbi, "May I ask you a question?"

"Yes, my son," and he stroked his soft, bright cheeks.

"Do you now love your own Jesus Christ?"

"No, child, no; and never will!" said the Rabbi, almost angrily.

"You mustn't say that," replied the little one, inclined to cry; "Jesus loves you so very much."

"No, child, not He. I hate Him!"

"Oh, don't! don't! but Jesus loves those who hate Him;" and the child hid for a minute his little face on the Rabbi's knee.

"Poor Christian child!" said the Rabbi, "I did not mean to wound thee. Go in peace, my son;" and the child wiped his eyes, and with Sir Claude's help the Rabbi was soon once more on deck.

The old Israelite and his friend took again their sheltered places; and whilst Salome and Ethelda joyfully talked together of what God had done for their souls, and the little children watched the sea-fowl, and gambolled on the deck—these disputed of many things concerning Jesus of Nazareth. Though old Moses continued steadfast in his unbelief, he felt yet more unfitted than before, to argue with his daughter concerning the faith which she had embraced;

and whenever he muttered to himself, "I hate the name of Jesus of Nazareth!" the infant's words seemed whispered again, "Jesus loves those who hate him."

Iona's quiet resting-place and Staffa's cathedral cave were both visited. The sky continued almost cloudless, and reflected its bright blue in the clear waters beneath. The shores of Mull looked very desolate; but as the steamer rounded its northern coast, the magnificent confusion of the mountains of Morven, and the hills of Ardnamurchan, burst upon their gaze, and showed the grandeur of their bleak and lofty outline. It was a voyage during which the thoughtful mind might, in Nature's volume, read many lessons.

"Rowly, what are you doing?" said Ethelda, who had been standing for some time unperceived beside her brother.

"Oh, Ethie! is that you?" said Rowland, starting. "I was thinking of Hubert's idea about the happy sea-birds—jotting down a sort of 'Ode to the Sea-gull.' I wish, though, I could write some poetry contrasting Staffa and Iona."

"Let me see what you have written, Rowly;" and Rowland, rather reluctantly, gave her his pocket-book, where she deciphered the following lines:—

"The tempest is o'er, there reigns now a lull;
Return to the main, thou happy sea-gull:
In its azure deep thy white bosom lave,—
Bright bird of the ocean, float o'er the wave!

Bright beams the sun in the sapphire sky,
Sparkle the billows like starlight on high,
No heat of its fierce, ris'n ray, need'st thou brave,—
Bright bird of the ocean, *plunge* 'neath the wave!

The cloud may be low'ring, thou need'st not fear,
O happy sea-gull! thy refuge is near;
No storm can approach in thy rocky cave,—
Bright bird of the ocean, *fly* o'er the wave!

O happy sea-gull! thy shrill carol sound,
Mid the roar of the ocean echoing round,
Raise thy wild song in Staffa's grand cave,
Join the bass roll of the loud, pealing wave."

"I should like to keep this, Rowly boy," said his sister.
"But now tell me, how were you contrasting Staffa and Iona?"

"I thought of Iona's Cathedral, man's work, in ruins, and then of Staffa's Cathedral, God's work, altogether untouched, firm as in the ancient days."

"I like that contrast. And what further musings, my brother?"

"I was thinking of Iona, once a bright star in a dark night, but now that day has dawned, lost in its brightness: or, in a more homely way, we might liken it to the torch that is used to lighten many candles, and having done its work becomes extinct. Then, Ethie, I thought, whether I should be content to be useful in my day and generation, and then to fall asleep."

"But that contentment is not required, Rowly. Falling asleep, even in Jesus, is not the end of our existence—is not the object of the Christian's hope. You compare Iona justly to the star lost in the dawn of morning, but that star still shines, though its light is no longer needed upon earth. I always like to think of the Sunday rather than of the Sabbath, of the waking up in Christ's likeness rather than of the falling asleep."

"You are right, Ethie; there is something sad in death. It is dark unless we have the bright hope of the glorious resurrection."

Salome joined the brother and sister, and they continued the conversation. Her thoughts were often on this subject, for she felt that death had already laid its touch on her. The hectic fever of the day, and the cold perspirations of the night, were rapidly consuming her little strength, but she now knew in whom she believed, and she rejoiced. She delighted to trust in Him, who declared Himself "the Resurrection and the Life," and to repeat the assurance, "Because He lives I shall live also." As they talked, the vessel was again approaching the peaceful Bay of Oban, and the sun was once more bathing itself gloriously in the Western Ocean. The land round the bay was already in the shade, and its deep violet tinge contrasted with the rosy light that yet beamed on the heights of Ben Cruachan.

"The highest hills have most of the sun's bright rays," said Ethelda.

"And the nearer to God the more of Jesu's presence,"

replied Salome, who, though weak in herself, was rapidly mounting from height to height, discovering new beauties in the Saviour, and feeling daily that the things of earth were passing away. "The morning soon shall break, and the sun that never sets shall rise."

Soon the Christian and the Israelite families parted, with little prospect of meeting again on earth. Yet there were some amongst them who trusted that they might all be citizens of the New Jerusalem, and, crowned by the King of glory on His holy hill of Zion, might humbly cast their crowns at the Saviour's feet, and hail him, "Lord of all."

CHAPTER XX.

CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

"I want, as a traveller, to haste
Straight onward, nor pause on my way—
Nor forethought nor anxious contrivance to waste
On the tent only pitch'd for a day."

A FEW weeks passed away, and the tourists were severally ensconced in winter quarters. Mrs. Maitland had rejoined her husband in her southern home; Rowland had commenced his college career; Gertrude was again in London; old Mr. Alleyne was enjoying the luxury of his well-furnished library; Ethelda delighting in the instruction of little Harry, or engaged in visiting the sand-huts and neighbouring cottages; whilst Sir Claude planned with Edward the colporteur many schemes for benefiting the ignorant peasantry around. He, who had once wondered that those who believed the Bible did not earnestly disseminate its doctrines, having been himself persuaded of the truth as it is in Jesus,

"Longed to tell to all around,
What a blest Saviour he had found."

The young baronet was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. He had embraced it with the full persuasion of its truth, feeling his need and seeing its sufficiency. His was no half-and-half Christianity. He was not a loiterer in the valley or on the side of the hill. With hearty zeal, he commenced the ascent of the mountain, and though sometimes cast down, and often perplexed, he still went forward. "Right onward" was his motto. He met with difficulties that others, more prudent, avoided, but he was strong in faith, and overleapt many an obstruction that would have sadly baffled his companions. Rowland likewise ascended the mount, but it was with a different step. There was not the same impetus at the commencement; he had not cleared the yawning abyss of infidelity. Onward he went; slowly, cautiously, determinately. Difficulties were realities with him. He climbed them laboriously, for he could not overleap them. Yet Rowland progressed, and the step that was slow was also sure, and that which at first went heavily gradually became more easy, and ere Rowland reached the summit of the mountain, the labour of the ascent was over, and he went on his way rejoicing.

Sir Claude longed for a companion in his pilgrimage. As night after night he sat solitary in his magnificent library, and passed the door of the unused drawing-room, the wish continually arose, that one might be given him to share his sorrows and his joys, to be a fellow-traveller on the road. He loved Ethelda, and felt that she would be to him all that he could desire, and more than he did deserve.

And Ethelda loved Sir Claude. Even before he became a decided Christian, the open manliness of his character had almost too much engaged her affection. She felt that her anxiety for his conversion was greater than for that of any other human being. She pleaded with her God that he might be saved with an intense earnestness, the source of which she did not then know. She was pleased to meet him, and watched with exceeding joy the way in which her prayers were answered, above what she could ask or think. Yet Ethelda consented not, when Sir Claude solicited her to become the wife of his bosom; she rather sought to hide the love she bore him. She refused her hand, and would not have him know that he already possessed her heart.

Ethelda was thoroughly unselfish; and in this, the greatest trial of woman's life, she thought first of her father, her brothers, her sisters, and the little Harry, and felt strongly that till Gertrude was able to fill her place at Alleynes, it was her duty to remain where Providence had placed her. Three years, in all probability, must elapse, ere she could conscientiously leave the home of her childhood, and she carefully abstained from saying one word which might prevent Sir Claude seeking another who could love him, and whom he could love. She did not know how deep was his affection, how bright a hope that word would have kindled, and how three years of waiting would have seemed as nothing for the love which he bore her. He returned home grieved and disappointed, and, as on that winter's evening he sat alone, holding companionship with the fitful flames of

the bright fire, he thought for long, over all the hopeful visions of the preceding night, withered, blighted, altogether demolished. At length he suddenly started, "I, a man, a Christian; this will never do! Are not the very hairs of my head all numbered? Did not I commit my way to God, praying that He would direct my steps? He wants to humble me, to prove me, to keep me from creature idolatry. I would not have another will. Thou lovest me and carest for me. Why should I care so for Ethie's love? Henceforth my walk is lonely, but Thou art with me; my pilgrimage is companionless, but may it ever be pressing onwards, reaching upwards."

Ethelda did not suffer less. To duty she had sacrificed the warm affections of youth, the bright hopes of earth's future. It was a costly sacrifice, which required a resolute struggle; it was a grief in which she could obtain no human sympathy. It was not mentioned to fellow-men, but it likewise was laid before her God, and Ethelda received comfort, though for a time she went on her way heavily. A frank avowal of her own affection would have prevented the deep sorrow that each one suffered, but no doubt this was withholden, that they might cease from man, and know only His love which passeth all things. A cloud seemed to hang over their pathway; the sunbeam on their way was hidden; but the light on the summit of the mountain was yet more visible, and their efforts to attain thither were more constant. Ethelda now found, that endeavouring to increase the happiness of her father, caring for the poor, and attending to

little Harry, relieved an oppressed mind, and her own grief would be, at least in a measure, forgotten, as she listened to the tales of another's woes, or endeavoured to share the childish joys of her little nephew.

It was on one of these days, when her own heart was oppressed, that she and Harry walked across the fields to old Colin's cottage. The aged man was in the lane, gathering a few sticks. He seemed wearied with the effort, and glad to return to his fireside, whilst little Harry was as pleased to be left without, getting a fresh supply for the good, old man, and depositing them in the little wheelbarrow which, filled with apples, he had brought to the cottage.

Ethelda told Colin how much Master Rowland liked college, and how he had written inquiring after him and Jeanie.

"It is very good of the young gentleman. I trust God's blessing may follow him wherever he goes. He is a *canny* fellow that. But have you heard anything yet of him, that's far away—the sailor one, I mean?"

"Yes, thank you, Colin. He is in China now. He writes us long and most amusing letters, and I trust God may keep him from all harm."

"Ye manna doubt that, ma'am. Did ye ever put anything in the Lord's keeping, and *He* neglected the charge? I've been thinking lately that we oft fancy God is such a one as ourselves, and that he *may* forget."

"Very true, Colin; we ought to honour God by strong

faith, but instead of that we anxiously pray concerning the future, holding our burden tight all the time."

"Jist so, ma'am; we won't let it go. We haven't courage to throw it out of our own hands, and cast it on the Lord; but still, praised be His name, 'He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.'"

"Colin, do you remember when you and Jeanie promised to pray for a drunkard's family?"

"Yes, ma'am, weel. We have never forgotten it from that day to this."

"And God is more ready to hear than we are to pray."

"True, ma'am; what has He done?"

"Changed, I trust, the heart of the father, and the once wretched man is now a new creature in Christ Jesus."

"Bless His holy name! Oh, ma'am, what a miracle it is, when the sinner's heart is changed! The infidel cannot gainsay that, for it's afore his eyes."

"And the means He employed were altogether powerless in themselves. His little girl had been sent to the infant-school, and one night he happened to come home sober, and the child, of whom he is very fond, climbed upon his knee. She commenced singing,—for she has a sweet voice,—

'Here we suffer grief and pain,'

and went on to the line,

'Parents, teachers, we shall meet.'

" 'Stop, child, that arn't true,' he said, suddenly.

" 'Why, daddy, don't you hope to be there?' the little one inquired. The father told me that question went to his heart, he could neither say yes nor no. He hardly slept for several nights, the question always haunting him, 'Don't you hope to be there?'

"At last Sunday came, and he told his wife that he meant to go to church. He went. The text was, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' Light began to dawn. He went to the Vicarage next day, and had a long conversation with Mr. Graham. He has since signed the total-abstinence pledge, for the habit was, he said, so inveterate with him, that he had no other way to break it off, and for some weeks past he has apparently experienced, 'Old things passed away, all things become new.'"

"It is jist the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous. Is it not, ma'am? Jeanie, we must praise to-night as well as pray."

At this moment Harry came in with his basket laden with sticks, and emptied it, according to Colin's direction, before the scant fire. His little heart was full of joy. Not only had there been the pleasure of stick-gathering, but old Colin said that he had "helped him fine," and Harry imagined he had done a work as important as if he had slipped a golden sovereign into his hands.

"Auntie, may I come back again, and gather sticks another day?" he whispered; and, receiving permission, the dear child, with all the eagerness of boyhood, trundled

his barrow homewards, filling it even then with sticks, to bring to old Colin the following morning.

The sand-huts were likewise an increasing object of interest to Ethelda. She visited them as regularly as practicable at noon every Monday. First, she received from the women their contributions to the clothing-club, that she had established. Then, a few of the men returned, not for their dinner so much as to hear the young lady speak; and the little gathering in the open air was continued. A simple portion of Gospel-history would be read, and Ethelda would endeavour to bring home the message of redeeming love,—would speak as a sinner unto fellow-sinners, as one who really saw her brethren perish, and besought them to flee from the wrath to come; and then a few verses of a simple hymn would be sung by these untutored children of Erin, and then each knee was bent, and, under heaven's canopy, though perhaps the chill wind was blowing, or the damp mist coming in from the sea, united earnest prayer ascended, from those who, a few months before, hardly knew the name of Jehovah; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Ethelda endeavoured to ward off cold by additional supplies of clothing; nor were these rough sons of toil regardless of their beloved young lady's comfort. Sometimes they had the fire lighted in the open air. Sometimes Peter stretched a cord from post to post, and there hung all the coats and shawls that could be mustered, albeit some were ragged, and some were threadbare. After the meeting, Ethelda went from hut to hut encouraging the industry of the mothers and girls, cut-

ting out a garment for one, admiring the improving cleanliness of the abode of another, or the neater aspect of the children of a third. There was often a sick one to visit, and the basket she always carried with her, contained from time to time packages of sago, arrowroot, or tea, flannel waistcoats, babies' frocks, pieces of soap, or the little can of strong beef-tea, to be distributed either as rewards for some effort made, or according to the necessities of the parties.

On one sunless, frosty morning in December, Ethelda almost hesitated to go; she feared the standing in the cold, and yet knew that there was not one hut that could hold above seven or eight people. Health was a talent, which she felt was very precious, and for which she was accountable. Yet she had not suffered hitherto; she could wrap herself up with extra clothes, but she could not disappoint her poor people. They probably had their pence ready, their huts arranged with special care, the hands and faces of their children clean, their dinners prepared at home, and their fire burning to welcome her among them. She knew not but that, with the increasing inclemency of the weather, Peter might have made some special effort of defence.

Ethelda resolved on going. A young friend was at that time staying at Alleyne, and they walked briskly the three miles, that the road extended towards their mission-field. Peter met Miss Alleyne with even a pleasanter face than usual.

"Oh, lady, ye're welcome! we were so afeart ye wasn't coming."

"Am I later than usual, Peter?"

"No, lady, it wasn't that; but we wanted you so to-day, and it was so uncommon cold, we feared you mightn't be no coming. But now, ladies, will ye step this way?"

"This is not our usual way to the huts."

"I think ye'll think it is the best the day," replied Peter, with a broad smile, and eyes that seemed as if they could hardly contain the joy that was there.

They passed round a sand-hillock, and on the side that was sheltered from the sea, a large shed had been erected. The sand-bank formed its back; the ends were staves driven into the ground, and filled up with furze-bushes; an opening in the front served the double purpose of door and window; whilst the roof was thatched with the long bents that grew on the links, excepting a hole at the north side for the smoke to find exit. Here a cheerful fire was burning, and at the entrance stood the women and children, eager to welcome their kind friend. Ethelda was almost overcome with this unexpected proof of her poor people's love for the simple service, which she had established. She silently thanked her God and took courage, and then entering the shed, she warmly expressed her admiration of the rude edifice, so well fitted to answer the end designed.

As the men came in from their morning's work, she thanked them for the kind thought, which had led to this erection—so entirely done of their own accord, and kept secret with the expectation that she would be the more gratified.

"It isn't for the likes of you, my lady, to be thinking of thanking the likes of us; I'm sure it's us, my lady, who can never be over-grateful to you under God, for many of us had not heard one word of the care of the Lord Jesus till ye came and told us. Sure, you must not say anything about thanks. It is us, that thanks you, and that from the core of our hearts."

"Then, M'Gee, let us all rise and thank the Lord. We will begin with singing this time;" and line by line she repeated three verses of the well-known hymn,—

'Jesus, where'er Thy people meet,
There they behold Thy mercy-seat;
Where'er they seek Thee Thou art found,
And every place is hallow'd ground.

For Thou, within no walls confined,
Inhabitest the humble mind;
Such ever seek Thee, where they come,
And going, take Thee to their home.

Kind Shepherd of Thy faithful few,
Thy former mercies here renew;
Here to our waiting souls proclaim
The sweetness of Thy saving name."

Ethelda then spoke of her constant theme,—that theme, which has power, when applied by the Holy Spirit, to make simple the spirit of the learned, and to enlighten the mind of the simple one; it was,—“Victory through the blood of the Lamb”—present victory amid present battles; final triumph

after the last great conflict. Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;—Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of Faith;—Jesus, placing the helmet on the soldier's head, and the crown upon the victor's brow,—was the subject of Ethelda's gentle speaking. To enlist under His banner, to fight beneath His cross, to receive glory from His hand, were the objects of her earnest persuasion. The more she loved the people, the more fervently did the prayer arise that all, men, women, and children, might partake of the great salvation.

Ethelda heard of illness in one of the huts. It was the big girl of sixteen, who from the first had seemed wholly unmoved. She had had a sudden attack of inflammation; and the doctor, who had been over, had given no hopes of her recovery. Ethelda stood for some time by her bedside, and endeavoured to rouse her, even then, when life was so quickly ebbing, to look to Christ, and to be saved.

"I am not afeard," she said, in a displeased tone.

"Not afraid to meet a God about whom you have never cared?"

"I have cared. I have worn this sacred bit thing all my life; and the praist told me I could not be lost, if I only kept it;" and she showed a charm that hung round her neck.

"And do you believe that thing can save you?"

"The praist told me so. I'm quite content. I'd rather you left me."

"Will you let me kneel beside you and pray?"

- "If you like, you can."

Ethelda knelt and prayed that poor Bridget Dunn might even now be saved—might still go unto Jesus, and giving up her trust in that which could not save her, might lay hold of Him as her only hope. When Ethelda rose, Bridget did not speak. A stupor seemed to have come over her, and there was little probability that she would regain consciousness.

Ethelda left the hut, oppressed in spirit. "Who, who is sufficient for these things?" she inquired. She felt her own total helplessness in delivering a soul from death; but she took her poor people yet more perseveringly unto Jesus, telling him of all their wants, and saying, "I cannot let Thee go, unless Thou bless them."

- The groom was on the sands with the horses, and Ethelda and her friend rode home, rejoicing that they had not been prevented coming, encouraged by the great things that God had done. Yet Ethelda could not wholly regain her spirits. Poor Bridget's case was an awful testimony to the truth of God's word, "He, that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

CHAPTER XXI.

FAITH'S CONFLICT.

Yes, billow after billow—see, they come
Faster and rougher as yon little boat
Nears evermore the haven. Oftentimes
It seems to sink and fall adown the wave,
As if borne backward by the struggling tide;
Yet, mounting billow after billow, wave
On wave o'erriding, tempest-tossed and shattered,
Still, still, it nears the haven evermore."

ABOUT Christmas time, Ethelda received a letter in strange handwriting, and with the Edinburgh postmark. The direction was traced in very faint ink, and was evidently written by a trembling hand. The signature was that of Salome,—Salome, who had been continually in her thoughts, of whom she had never ceased to make mention in her prayers, concerning whom she had often wondered, whether enrolled in the Church of Christ militant, or admitted to the ranks of that Church triumphant.

The letter told of past and present sorrows, of bitter waters tasted, of deep rivers passed; and yet it told of joy in the Lord Jesus, of light in the midst of darkness. Salome had never left Scotland. For some time she and her father

had remained at Rothesay, benefiting by its mild and healthful air. And yet the poor old man enjoyed it not. His heart was bowed down, because of the apostasy, as he conceived, of his children from the God of their fathers. He sometimes conversed with Salome, but he felt and confessed the futility of his arguments. At length, in an evil hour, he wrote to his brother in London, and opened to him the grief of his lacerated heart. The brother and another learned Jew came down to Scotland, to turn Salome from her Christian faith, if possible, by strong and learned arguments; or, if these were ineffectual, by bribery, or by threatenings. The former were altogether futile. Evening after evening they talked, until the widow's physical strength was exhausted, but they could not shake her faith in the crucified Jesus of Nazareth; they could not pluck out of His hand the sheep which had entered His fold. And then they urged the father to cast her off altogether, not to suffer a child who had departed from the faith of her forefathers to remain beneath his roof. "No," said the old man, "I cannot help her faith. She is not long for this world. I will persuade her to make no profession of her belief, but rather to conceal her Christianity. Then she may continue to abide with me, and ere she is gathered to her fathers, we may yet welcome her return to the faith in which she was begotten."

"Then, only on condition of her faith being concealed, shall she remain in your house."

"Be it so," replied the Rabbi.

"And the child must be taken from her."

"Not whilst her mother lives; yet a little while, and poor Adah will not know a mother's love."

The Rabbi soon told Salome the terms on which it was resolved that she should continue with him. "I would have dealt more harshly, my child, but thou art my only remaining one; and I pray God that thou mayest yet see the error of thy ways, and turn from thy backsliding."

"Father! my own precious father!" said Salome, weeping convulsively, "it cannot be; I must confess the Saviour I have found;—I *cannot* deny Him."

"Your health, my child, may be an excuse for your not going to worship, if you will it. Only let it not be known that you are a Nazarene."

"Oh, father, do not tempt me! My Saviour has said, 'He that is ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.' I must confess Jesus."

"Then, Salome, dost thou leave thy old father in his age? Dost thou bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave?"

"Oh, father—my dear, good father! so kind, so loving, how I love thee!" and she laid her aching head upon his shoulder and sobbed there: the struggle endured but a little while; at last she added, "I cannot conceal my Christianity."

"Is that thy final word, Salome?"

"Yes, father; I cannot say otherwise."

"Then go, my child, an outcast from thy father's house; and when thy head shall rest upon its dying pillow, then

think of the grief, of the broken heart of thy father,—think of his streaming eyes, of his trembling frame.”

Salome was unconscious of all that passed immediately after this. She saw not her father again. The following morning her uncle sternly inquired whether she held the same resolve, and being answered in the affirmative, he mentioned the bare pittance that should be quarterly forwarded to her, and forbade her approach to her father’s home.

Salome endeavoured to speak, but utterance seemed denied her. There was one question she trembled to ask, for she felt sure that the answer would only realise her worst apprehensions.

Her cheeks were bleached, and her lips quivered, as with difficulty she articulated, “My child?”

“She is gone with her grandfather. She must be brought up in the religion of her ancestors.”

Salome raised her hand to her head. She fell back on the couch and for long remained insensible. When she recovered, a waiting-girl stood beside her. Her uncle had left the apartment, and only waited to hear of her senses returning, before he started for the south.

The widow never rose from her couch that day; she was altogether prostrated; her mind for a time seemed bewildered; but as evening approached, she heard the voice of Jesus in the storm, “It is I, be not afraid;” and though the billows swelled and the tempest was high, she trusted Him, and felt assured that He would guide her into the longed-for haven.

Poor old Moses was yet more to be pitied. He had rejected Him, who alone could comfort; he had turned his face from the only spot of the dark horizon where the Star of hope shone. As he travelled with his orphan grandchild, and parried her oft-repeated questions, "Where is my dear mamma? why is she not with us? why did not I wish her good-by this morning?" his heart misgave him, as to his conduct towards his poor, dying daughter. "It is true, I have left enough to ensure for her every earthly comfort; I have told my brother to make arrangements weekly, that I may be informed concerning her health, and I trust to see her again before she dies. Would to God that I had told her this myself! Would that I had seen her once more this morning to tell her, I should ever pray that she may yet be restored to Israel's fold! Why was I so hurried off? My poor, unhappy child? Thy poor, unhappy father! Oh! that I had been cut off in the flower of my age, ere I buried in the dust the desire of mine eyes, ere I heard my children each call blessed, the accursed Nazarene! Behold me! behold me! a blasted plant in Thy vineyard—a ruined pillar in Thy temple."

There was no ray of hope in Moses' despondency; no thought of comfort in his misery. He knew not the worst, for he had been deceived by his brother, who, dreading the influence of Salome's strong faith in the broken-hearted Rabbi, was resolved that he should never see again the child of his affections.

Great agitation had much accelerated the symptoms of

Salome's disease, but in her landlady there was provided for her a tender nurse. A few days of perfect quiet in a measure restored her, but the hectic on her cheek was much deeper, and her strength, when she coughed, appeared much feebler. Her soul had, in the meantime, become as a weaned child; yea, as a child that is weaned from its mother. She had passed through terrible conflict, but it had left her dead to earthly things, or rather to earthly cares. She did not love less her father or her child, but she was now enabled to trust them wholly to the Lord. She experienced His power, and knew that He was able to save those whom she committed to Him. She tasted in tenfold measure His love, and felt assured that He was willing to deliver the aged parent and little child, whom she brought unto Him.

She wrote, whenever strength permitted, to her parent, but the anxiously-watched post brought no reply.

Her means were almost expended, and soon she would be left in a strange land, afflicted, portionless, friendless. Yet she knew her God as Jehovah Jireh, and doubted not that He would supply all her wants.

Her greatest care was to be permitted to confess her faith; and, by the sign of baptism, to be admitted into the visible Church of Christ. But she was a stranger in the large city, too weak to wander to a place of worship, and too timid to write to any minister, of whom she knew nothing but the name. And then it was that she determined to

write to Æthelda, and seek counsel from her who had first directed her weary footsteps to Him, who giveth rest. She only knew the name of her friend, and the county where she resided, but she supplicated the God who heareth prayer, so to order it, that the letter might safely reach its destination.

And so it did. Æthelda, with great solicitude, deciphered the few lines that were written, and discovered that Salome was forsaken by her friends, but supported by her God. Immediately the wish arose that her poor, suffering friend, might be brought to Alleyne, and she raised her heart to heaven that her father might be inclined to grant her request.

She took the letter to Mr. Alleyne's library and read it to him. The old man had had a long-rooted prejudice against the Jews; and during their Highland tour he had sometimes complained of his daughter's "enthusiasm about that Jewish family."

She, therefore, feared to proffer her request; and having read the letter, silently waited for her father's comment.

"Is it true, I wonder? Those Jews are such hypocrites."

"Oh! father dear, not all Jews. We know Salome. She could have no motive, but the love of Christ constraining her. Remember, she is dying."

"You may have her here, child, if she can come."

"Oh, thank you, my own dear father! and without my

asking you!" And then Ethelda remembered that she had asked her God, and inwardly she thanked Him.

"Do you think she will want any money?" inquired Mr. Alleyne.

"She does not say one word about that, father; but I fear she cannot travel alone. She says she is much weaker than she used to be, and has not left the house since her father's departure."

"Well, she must see to that. I am not going to let you go, Ethie, in search of her."

"No, father dear! I am not asking," said Ethelda quietly. "We will think of some way to bring her here."

Old Mr. Alleyne spoke rather crossly. He had resolved that he would not ask the Jewish family to his house, and yet, unsolicited, he had proposed it; for his kind and Christian feelings were roused by Salome's letter. Yet, he was annoyed to think that circumstances had so arisen, and that his previous determination had given way. Soon, however, these feelings were overcome, and no one took a deeper interest in the widowed, friendless Salome, than old Mr. Alleyne.

When Salome first received Ethelda's letter of invitation, her impulse was to decline it, fearing to trespass on a stranger's hospitality. But when she read it again, and marked the Christian spirit by which it was dictated, she remembered the Saviour's words, "Inasmuch as ye do it to one of the least of these, ye do it unto me," and she determined to conquer her feelings of false delicacy, and for

the present, at least, gratefully to accept the hospitality offered, and to regard it as a covert provided by her God to screen her from the tempest. A person whom the lodging-woman knew intended going to England the following week, and under her charge it was fixed that Salome was to travel. The day was cold and bleak, and the wooden benches of the second-class carriage were a poor preservative from its rigour. A five-pound note had been anonymously sent to Salome, but she knew by the post-mark it was from Alleyne, and her delicate sense of honour forbade her now to travel at a greater expense than necessary, though she had always been accustomed to every comfort, which fortune could procure.

With cold, hunger, and weariness, she was wholly exhausted when she reached Alleyne, and had to be carried from the carriage to her pleasant apartment. A cheerful fire was blazing there, and a couch was placed beside it. At the further end was a low window, overlooking the flower-garden and the plantations beyond. The pretty chintz-hangings of the bedstead, the arm-chair, the footstools, the writing-table, all seemed exactly what an invalid required, and to have been chosen, that she might spend whatever time she preferred in her own apartment. It was nearly a week before she was able to leave it, and often during that time Ethelda took her work, or a book, and sat beside the sufferer. She felt that it was a privilege to do so. Salome had passed through strong fire, but it had purified the gold

until the refiner's image was reflected. She was as the vine that had indeed been purged by a sharp pruning-knife, but now it brought forth much fruit. She was as grain, fully ripened for the heavenly garner, or as the flower fitly expanded, to be plucked by Him who feedeth among the lilies. There were two subjects on which Salome yet manifested much anxiety,—the one was to be enrolled by profession in the ranks of the Church militant, to bear on earth the name of Christian; and the other, again to hear from, or to see, her beloved but sorrowing parent, and to clasp once more her gentle Adah. Yet, these blessings were submissively sought. She had learnt to say, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

Mr. Graham was much interested concerning the Jewish widow. Feeling that she had been taught by Christ, that the Holy Ghost bore witness with her spirit and by her spirit, that she had been born of God, he hesitated not in the proposal that she should be baptized, and was willing to administer it privately at Alleyne.

"I have never been," said Salome, "within the walls of a Christian church. I know that place can confer no real benefit: but, were it practicable, I should like, in a spot consecrated to the worship of my triune God, to profess my faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

"But would there not be risk of cold?" inquired Mr. Graham, looking at her worn-out frame, which it seemed as if a breath of wind could blight.

"My time is short, I know, and an increase of cold might hasten my departure. Still I would use every means to avert it, and He, who numbereth the hairs of my head, can guard me. I can do but little for Christ—I can labour but one short hour. I have publicly worshipped amongst those who hated His holy name. I feel that I ought, if possible, publicly to confess it. Do you not think so?"

"Decidedly. I rejoice in the view you have taken; and may our blessed Saviour enable you to witness a good confession, and by it to glorify His name."

It was on a Sunday in January, one of those bright, lovely days that sometimes surprise us in mid-winter, that beside the font in Alleyne church stood the young Jewish widow. She rejoiced to make confession of her faith in the crucified Son of God. She rejoiced with humble confidence. Her step was much firmer, and her eyes were much brighter, than they had been since the day of her arrival. Those who saw her for the first time did not think that she was so near the tomb; yet she entered not those sacred courts again, till, borne thither by the feet of others, the pastor who now signed her with the sign of the cross, in token that she should continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto her life's end, should declare in the words of his risen Lord, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

As they waited for the carriage on the day of Salome's baptism, Ethelda led her round by her mother's tomb. They read the brief inscription below the figure of the slain lamb,—“ I laid my sins on Jesus.” “ Worthy, worthy is the Lamb,” said Salome, the tears filling her eyes, “ for He hath borne my sins and carried my sorrows. In heaven I shall sing that song more clearly. You cannot tell my joy. A professed follower of Jesus now, humbly trusting that, washed in His blood, I shall hereafter follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. When I am gone, think of me only, as conquering by the Lamb of God who bled on Calvary's cross.”

“ Yes, I shall think of the frail, tender Salome, more than conqueror through Him who loved her.”

“ Has not God chosen the weakest in faith an inheritor of the kingdom to glorify Himself in me? Oh that He would permit my poor father to know the blessedness I now experience! My friend, wilt thou promise me, never to cease to pray for my beloved parent and poor child?”

“ I will try, Salome, remembering the promise, ‘ If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.’ ”

“ One of the glorious promises of Jehovah my Saviour. We must not doubt it. I feel that the love, which has stooped to pluck Salome as a brand from the burning, will yet save my father, and preserve my precious child.”

Thus, strong in faith, Salome trusted. God delights in the faith which honours Him by simple credence of His word. He never sends the humble, believing soul empty away ; like a prince, He giveth it royal favours, far exceeding what it could ask or think.

CHAPTER XXII.

FAITH'S VICTORY.

"The shadows of evening are fleeing,
Morn breaks from the city of light,
This moment day starts into being,
Eternity bursts on my sight."

SALOME went on her way rejoicing. All her future cares she trusted to her covenant God, and for the present mercies, her grateful soul seemed as if it could not sufficiently bless the Lord, or thank the beloved friends whom He had provided as instruments of blessing.

Oftentimes her eyes would appear red with weeping,—weeping for very joy, to think of the Saviour whom she had found, and of all His countless mercies. It is true that she held a cross, a heavy cross, but, as the pilgrim taught of God, she so used it that it became the staff to assist her mountain ascent, ever leading her nearer to her God, her heaven, her home.

One morning Sir Claude arrived unexpectedly. He had been seldom at Alleyne of late, and had not seen Salome since their meeting in the Highlands. He rejoiced in her

joy, and spoke to her as a brother in Christ Jesus. He inquired after the old Rabbi.

"He is well," answered Salome; "at least, a letter forwarded to me from my uncle assures me of his health; but I cannot understand hearing nothing from himself direct. I know how he loved me, and how often he has assured me that he would never altogether cast me away."

"I go to town to-morrow. Can I do anything to assist? Can I call to see your father?"

"Would you?" and a brilliant light beamed in her deep black eyes. "It would indeed be joy to me to know of his welfare from one whom I can trust. Tell him that Salome never ceases to pray for him and for Adah; and tell him that I indeed find Christ's ways are those of peace. Tell him that the outward man decays, but the inner man is renewed; and tell him that Salome longs to see his face once more before she dies."

She then, with a trembling hand, wrote his direction, and prayed that God might speed him in his search for her aged parent.

There was nothing strange concerning the house where Rabbi Moses at this time dwelt. He had left his own home, for he felt childless and forsaken, and lived with his brother, a rich merchant, whose house was a handsome mansion at the "West-end" of the great metropolis. Sir Claude, inquiring for the Rabbi Moses, was ushered into a small apartment behind the dining-room. There sat his aged friend, with his fine bald head, aquiline nose, and long snowy beard.

He raised his eyes, but the quick flash of them was gone. He was, indeed, like one who had seen affliction.

"Rabbi Moses," said Sir Claude, "do you remember a stranger you met last summer in the Highlands?"

"Highlands! yes, Highlands!" said the old man, with an expression of stupidity.

"As you went to Staffa and Iona: your daughter, Salome, was with you, and a little grandchild."

"I know;" and then he fixed his eyes on him for a long while.

"I remember thee well. Dost thou know aught of Salome?" said the old man, with a trembling voice.

"I saw her but three days ago. She longed to hear of her aged parent."

"Is she well? And wherefore has she never written to her sorrowing father?"

"She is not well. She has often written; and she longs to see you before she dies."

"I must go! I must go! She has often written! My child, I must see thee before thou dost die. Is she in Edinburgh?"

"No, she is at Alleyne, with the friends you met in Scotland. She rejoices in the countless mercies of her God, and could she only see you and her child, would be ready to depart in peace."

"My Salome! my poor Salome! thy father must see thee; and thy child shall go, too. What have they done with thy letters?"

The Rabbi at this moment looked another man. The stupor of grief seemed to have passed away. His former keenness had in measure returned, and his spirit of determination roused, it appeared indomitable as ever. His countenance frequently changed, as for a few moments he stood lost in thought, beside Sir Claude.

"I must go. I was determined that Salome should never be cast from her father's house, if she wished to return. Though an apostate, I have not ceased to love her; and though she has brought down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave's dark verge, I was resolved no act of mine should wound her spirit. Who has deceived me concerning her? I have been cruelly deceived. To-morrow I go. Will you give me her direction?"

"I am in town for only a few days. I should be glad to accompany you."

"I cannot wait, lest my child should die ere I behold her. You say she is very ill."

"But not in immediate danger. Her disease is one in which life is often prolonged for weeks and months."

"I must go! I must go! There will be no one to assist me here. Couldst thou? The Israelite does bend to ask a favour of a Christian;" and he bowed with proud dignity. "Couldst thou come for me and the child, and help an aged man, so as to set him forth on his journey?"

Sir Claude heartily promised compliance with this request, and returned home to write to Salome, and thus to gladden her heart with the thought of her father's visit.

That night was one of angry altercation between the Rabbi and his brother; the one indignant at the discovery of letters concealed, the other affecting zeal for his religion, and abusing the venerable man as an apostate from the faith of his forefathers.

"I hearkened to thee," said the Rabbi, "and cast off Naomi; but the curse of God has followed me, and my child, driven away, has never returned to the religion of her forefathers. I will hearken to thee no longer,—Salome shall return with me, and to her dying day I will not cease to beseech her to turn from her backslidings, and may the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob yet receive her graciously, and love her freely."

"Beware of the fair speeches of Christians; they will draw thee even to apostatize from thy faith; and though thou, Rabbi Moses, hast lived long, and thy nation have thought well of thee, yet know thou, that if the righteous turn away from his righteousness and commit iniquity, and doeth according to the abominations that the wicked man doeth, in the sin which he hath sinned, in it shall he die."

The thought of apostasy was altogether hateful to the Rabbi; the idea of being warned of it—at his age and experience—was more than he could bear. He became pale with rage, and violently reproached the brother, who thus added insult to his former injuries.

In the mean time, the great-aunts of Adah were planning how they could prevent the child being again brought under the influence of her apostate mother, and they thought that

they had succeeded. At dead of night, she was to be conveyed by her aunt Sarah to lodgings in a far distant part of London, and the aged Rabbi, baffled in his design, and impatient to see his daughter, would probably, from necessity, relinquish the thought of searching for the little one, in order that she might accompany him.

Persuasions being altogether fruitless, the sisters rather suddenly adopted another tone—expressed much concern for the fatigue that was before the aged man, and implored him to retire early to rest.

His suspicions were roused,—“I must see Adah first. Are her things prepared?”

“Yes; Miriam has been directed to pack them up. Your presence in the sleeping room may disturb her. It is of importance she should rest, before so long a journey.”

“Thou art very considerate; but I shall not disturb the child.”

He hastened to the room. Adah was there, fast asleep in innocent repose. Her dark hair had escaped from her little nightcap, and hung in curls about her neck, and her dark eye-lashes and eye-brows contrasted with the crimson glow with which her cheeks seemed painted. The Rabbi bent down to kiss the little one.

“Miriam,” he exclaimed in an agitated voice, “the child does not usually sleep in her day attire; how comes this?” and he threw off the clothes, which discovered the little Adah prepared for the pre-arranged night-journey.

“Thou takest time by the forelock, methinks. That

being so, she shall sleep in my bed to-night, and I will watch the child; and so I shall neither have to rise nor to dress."

"Brother, thou wilt not disturb the slumbers of that sweet innocent? Measures have only been taken to accelerate thy departure in the morning, as thou wert so determined."

"Thy cruel brother must disturb its sweet slumbers," replied the Rabbi, in a tone of bitter irony; "and would that thy rest were innocent as hers!"

Miriam obeyed with gladness. She was herself in part a Christian. Strong curiosity had led her to read the Testament, simply because it was a forbidden book, and her imagination and moral perceptions were pleased with the story it contained. She did not *feel* Christianity, but she favoured it. She cared personally for none of these things, but she sympathised with Adah in her love for her mother, and she had often pleased the little girl, by telling her the same stories about Jesus, which she had heard from her mamma.

"Now, Miriam, let her clothes be brought in here," desired her grandfather.

"Yes, sir, as soon as possible. I have packed up Miss Sarah's things with hers. Shall they go together now?"

"Was Miss Sarah going with her?" said the Rabbi, repressing his feelings with a strong effort.

"Yes, sir, at a very early hour of the morning."

"She is not going now. Bring the things as soon as

possible, for I shall lock the door, and at seven o'clock to-morrow bring up the child's breakfast."

It was enough for the Rabbi to know, that the plans laid for carrying off Adah were disconcerted. His frame was altogether shaken, and he felt that he could battle no longer with those of his own household. He spent the night in anxious, feverish solicitude, starting at every sound, and imagining that the most distant footstep was some one coming by stealth to take the child away. At length morning dawned, and the unconscious Adah awoke. She could not understand being in her grandfather's room, and enjoyed thinking of the surprise she had had. And then, when told that she was going to see her mamma, her own mamma, the little one threw herself into every attitude of delight; and at last, bounding on her grandfather's knee, she exclaimed, "I am so happy! so very happy, grandpapa dear! I don't know what to do for joy." The child's delight was some recompense to him for the anxious watching of the past night. It brought tears into his eyes, which, in a slight degree, relieved the over-wrought anxiety of the brain. He again became more nervous and restless as the time drew near for Sir Claude's appearance, and refused the repeated invitations that were given to him to come down and breakfast with the family. All the food he tasted was a little of Adah's coffee, which the loving child coaxed her grandfather to take. Sir Claude, who arrived exactly at the time specified, was shocked to see how haggard and care-worn old Moses appeared. He perceived from his countenance that he had had a desperate

struggle, either with his own feelings or with the opinions of others. Sir Claude was convinced that the latter was the case, when he observed the look of triumph that flashed in the old man's eye, as he drove from the door of his brother's house. At the station he tottered and nearly fainted; but Sir Claude procured wine at the refreshment-room, and the spirit of the Rabbi seemed to revive. "Thank you much," he said, shaking hands with his Christian friend; "it is enough: I shall go and see her before I die."

"I wish I could have accompanied you," replied the baronet, "but this guard will look after all you want; and you have not to leave the carriage until you reach Fairford station, where I do not doubt some friends will meet you. May your God and my God bless and keep you."

Little Adah ceased not to prattle during the long journey of that day. It was all about her mamma, "My own dear mamma. Will she say, 'I am so surprised to see Adah grown?' Don't you think, my grandfather, she will take me on her knee, and say, 'May Jesus love thee, my darling?'" I would like to hear mamma tell pretty stories again. Do you think she will let me open and shut her watch?" Why are you so grave, grandpapa? Don't you like to go and see my own mamma?"

The Rabbi groaned, but did not reply; and he was greatly relieved when two other passengers came in, and, noticing the winning little child, took her on their knee and pointed out from the window the varied objects they passed. At length the long journey was over, and old Moses and lit-

tle Adah entered the hall of Alleyne. Harry was there to welcome his little friend, and Ethelda supported the trembling Rabbi to an easy chair in the drawing-room. Poor old man ! he was indeed very ill, and, for a couple of hours, totally unable to see his beloved daughter, the object of all his solicitude. He at length raised himself from the couch. "Now I can see Salome;" and leaning on Miss Alleyne, he went to his daughter's room.

Father and child seemed alike near to eternity. They wept as they saw one another again; and fell upon each other's neck and kissed each other. A peace which passed all understanding beamed in the countenance of the one; a deep, settled, despairing sorrow rested in the eye of the other:

Ethelda prevailed on Salome again to lie down on the couch, and wheeled beside it the arm-chair and footstool for the aged Rabbi; and then she left them, that they might talk together of the way wherein they had been led. They talked long; but before they parted, Salome said, "My dearest father, you ask if I am still a Christian. You know that I am dying. Consumption has made rapid inroads. The doctor knows not whether I may live many days or many hours. Standing on the threshold of time and of eternity, advancing into the immediate presence of the Holy Jehovah, I have full trust and confidence in Jesus my Saviour. He is able, He is willing, to sustain me. My father, if you only knew Him, you, too, would doubt no more."

"My child, how I have prayed that I might hear thee express thy faith in the One, Eternal, Unchangeable Jehovah! How I have prayed that, ere you died, we might again have fellowship in our holy religion."

"Amen, my beloved father! may your prayer be answered above what you can ask or think."

The old man kissed his child with a sad, deep-drawn sigh, and retired to his own apartment. His frame was altogether exhausted, and he slept that night as a little child.

Day by day, according as strength would allow, did Salome talk with her father, and answer from the Old Testament Scriptures all the arguments he advanced to disprove the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth. The old man's hopes grew gradually fainter. He became convinced that all endeavours to bring back his daughter to the path whence she had wandered were in vain. He had set out, thinking he would achieve a triumph for his faith. He must return, confessing that his child had died an apostate. He sensibly felt the kindness of the Christian family, who pressed him to remain, and continually did he pray for them, that though their hearts were darkened, and their faith was wrong, yet that they might receive an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of God—a reward for the pity they showed unto the children of Abraham.

Rabbi Moses had been about ten days at Alleyne. He was seated beside Salome. The rest of the family were at

church. His daughter had seemed more oppressed than usual during the morning, but now she appeared revived.

"My father, dearest father!" she said, "I have two requests to make. They are the dying wishes of thy Salome. Wilt thou, my beloved parent, let my Adah's future home be at Allecne? My dear friend has promised that, with your permission, she shall be brought up with the little Harry. Wilt thou say yes, my father?"

"What is thy other request, Salome? Oh! do not break thy father's heart."

"Wilt thou, dearest father, read day by day a chapter of this precious book?" and she handed him a large printed copy of the New Testament. "Wilt thou read it with this heartfelt prayer,—'Almighty God, show me the way, the truth, and the life?'"

"I know the way; why should I pray to know it?"

"Wilt thou read it for Salome's sake, my father?" And the hand which she held, was wet with many tears.

"I will, my daughter; but I cannot promise thee concerning Adah."

"Then God's will be done! The Good Shepherd careth for my little lamb."

The Rabbi took the Testament with him, as he retired to his room that night. He had often read it to discover passages for cavilling, or for ridiculing; now it was to please a dying daughter, round whom his tenderest affections were entwined, and concerning whom he sorrowed day and night. He held the volume, which had seduced two of his children

from the faith of their fathers,—the book to which he owed all his present grief. He trembled with almost superstitious feelings as he opened it. Salome had placed a marker at John, xiv., and her father commenced reading those beautiful verses.

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.” The Rabbi sighed a long, deep sigh, for the old man’s heart was indeed troubled.

“In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.

“And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.”

His heart was troubled. The simple beauty, the love, the comfort of the words, seemed balm to his wounded spirit. And yet they were the words of the despised Nazarene. The conflict of feeling—the breaking down of prejudices—the taking of the stronghold by surprise—were too much for the aged man. He laid his head upon the book, and wept for a long, long time. The last words,—“The way ye know,” rung in his ears, and again and again he repeated, “No, no, I know nothing about it. I know not the way. How can I know the way? But it is strange? There is comfort in this book. He read further,—

“Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

"Wonderful! wonderful words! The words that my child would have taught me. Is it possible that Christianity is, after all, true; that Salome has found the way, the truth, and the life, and that I am in error? No, no, it cannot be! But there is no harm in praying the prayer;" and he clasped his hands, and said with extreme earnestness,—“O thou great Jehovah, show unto one, who is a worm and no man, the way, the truth, and the life.”

He read repeatedly the first six verses, and thought much upon them, during the still hours of the night. The next day he did not leave his own chamber. It was devoted to prayer, and fasting, and reading of the Scriptures.

In the evening, he perused again the fourteenth of John. As he read, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you;” he mused,—“This peace hath been not pronounced only, but experienced. That, and that only, can sustain my Salome. It is the word of God and not of man.” And the Jewish Rabbi bowed his head, and worshipped Jesus of Nazareth.

It seemed strange that one who had so hated Christianity, should be so speedily convinced. But God worketh as He will. He delights to honour His word, and to answer prayer. Earnest, effectual prayer, had for long ascended on the Rabbi's behalf. Salome's couch was often wet with tears, as, with strong crying and great faith, she supplicated for her father's conversion. The family at

Alleynes prayed, and Sir Claude earnestly sought that a blessing might at length descend upon the aged man; and even little Harry's petition was not in vain, when he often-times asked that Adah's grandpapa might love the "dear name of Jesus." Rabbi Moses knew well all the arguments in favour of Christianity; and his intellect, at times clear and unclouded, was able to gather these together, and to gain the consent of his understanding, to the conviction of his heart, that Jesus was the Messiah that should come into the world.

He had never admitted a doubt of Judaism, until, taking the Testament from his dying Salome, he thought of her peace which passed all understanding. That doubt soon became a certainty; and ere many days had elapsed, he also tasted the peace which Jesus bequeathed.

After the day of seclusion was passed, and the painful struggle had terminated in complete conviction, the Rabbi stood once more beside his Salome. The sands of time were rapidly running out with her, and he saw his child greatly changed. He took her hand.

"Salome, I have read thy Testament. I have read it nearly all, and I have learnt that Jesus of Nazareth is the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

The tears started into her eyes, the hectic colour deepened in her transparent complexion. For a little while she could not speak, and only laid her head upon his neck and kissed him. "My dearest, dearest father," she at length articulated, "praise the Lord!" But she could say

no more. A violent paroxysm of coughing overcame her, and left her almost powerless. When somewhat recovered, she took her father's hand, and lay gazing at him with a smile of perfect peace, of highest joy,—it almost seemed like a smile of heaven,—there was not the shadow of a cloud to darken it.

Peaceful, and holy, and joyful, were the three days that followed that. Salome's sun was truly setting, but the cloud that had overshadowed it had passed away, and each moment, its beams appeared more golden, more resplendent.

It was on the evening of the first Friday in March, that Salome was able to sit for a short while in an easy chair near the fire. Her little girl stood beside her, whilst she and her father talked of the arrangements made for Adah to remain, according to the kind plan of Miss Alleyne.

"I have no thought now for the future. In God has been my confidence, and He hath not failed. It is Friday night, is it not, father?"

"Yes, my daughter."

"And God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it. And Jesus' holy body and soul rested the seventh day, according to the commandment; and there remaineth for us a Sabbath-keeping. Methinks, dear father, that whilst the first day is now *the* holy day, the day of joy and thanksgiving, the day of resurrection, still the Sabbath has not lost its blessedness—nay, it is rather increased; for not only does it commemorate creation's work completed, but redemption's likewise; it is alike the Creator's and the

Redeemer's day of rest. Do you not think so, Ethie?" she said, turning to her friend.

"Yes, dearest, I quite agree with you. We may liken it to a star that shone with double glory, just before it was lost in the brighter dawn of day."

"Oh! yes, and it is a blessed thought, that our seventh day of rest shall be followed by the resurrection light of the first day of the unrevealed glories of a new week." She stopped suddenly. "Ethie, I feel very faint. Perhaps my Sabbath dawns——"

Ethelda hastened to support her friend, who had turned pale as marble. She laid her on the couch and endeavoured to restore her. For a quarter of an hour she breathed. In a broken whisper she was heard to say, "I trust in Jesus," and then she laid down her pilgrim-staff, the ascent being gained, the warfare accomplished.

When the believer dies, the six days' work which the Spirit hath wrought is beheld very good. Then, sanctification perfected, he enters on that Sabbath-keeping which yet remaineth for the people of God.

CHAPTER XXIII.

REUNION.

"Brother, thou art gone before us,
And thy ransom'd soul is flown,
Where tears are wiped from ev'ry eye,
And sorrow is unknown;
From the burden of the flesh,
And from care and fear released,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest."—MILMAN.

NATURE looked glad on the day on which Salome was buried. It was a bright and spring-like day,—the sky was blue, and the air was warm, and the woods round Alleyne resounded with the notes of countless songsters—life and joy seemed written on everything, but in that narrow coffin there was death. The eyes there were closed; the hands there were still; the mother's fondness, the daughter's devotion—all—all had passed away! The aged father stood beside that coffin, and gazed long upon those marble features. It was the last look, and then he turned away, and the undertaker fastened down the coffin-lid, and soon all were ready to convey those sacred remains to their long, long home. The father's head was bowed, but his was no longer

a hopeless sorrow. He had learnt of Him, who is the Resurrection and the Life, and he trusted Him with his beloved one. "Yet a little while," he said, "and I shall go to thee. Yet a little while, and where Jesus is, there shall we also be. Salome, my Salome! thy mission has been fulfilled, and now in the heavenly glory thou appearest before thy God." The old man and the little Adah followed to the grave as chief mourners. The little one cried bitterly, and yet she seemed to feel that she must comfort her mourning grandfather, and she kissed again and again the hand she so tightly held. Rabbi Moses felt that the place where his child was laid was very dear to him. He was too much enfeebled, too much unnerved, to return to London, and he had made arrangements to remain, during the few days that were left unto him, at the vicarage, under the roof of the excellent Mr. Graham. Ethelda had begged that Adah might stay at Alleyne, and when the aged man heard that she really desired a companion for little Harry, he gladly assented. "I love the boy almost as my own son," he said; "and I like to believe that my Salome's child is brought up with him. How does God's mercy exceed all that I could ask or think!"

The old man lingered for some time beside Salome's new-made grave, and Rowland stood by him, to support his tottering frame. "Where she is buried, there would I be buried; and when we are laid side by side, let a small stone tomb be placed over us, and these words engraven there: 'Jesus said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.'"

He returned to spend his last night at Alleyne. The next morning he was to go to the vicarage, and to be, on that day, baptized. All was quiet at the mansion when he returned; it seemed as if a daughter of the family, a loved member of the household, was gone.

Adah had gently found her way into her grandfather's room, and little Harry had followed.

"My Adah will never forget her mother?" said the old man, as the children stood beside his knee.

"No, dear grandfather, never."

"I wish people never died," said Harry, half inclined to cry; "or, at least, that we could all die together: that would be nice."

"Would you not be afraid to die?"

"Oh, no! You know how bright heaven is. But I don't like other people dying;—I was so frightened when Aunt Ethie was nearly killed, only I knew then that God would make her well—and He did."

"And why didn't God make my mamma well?" said Adah.

"I don't know," answered Harry. "God can't be cruel, you know, can He, grandfather?"

"No, my son: God wished Adah's mother to be in heaven, and she is happy now with Jesus."

"Grandpapa," inquired the little boy, "don't you think that you will very soon be going to heaven too, and see Adah's mamma?"

"I trust so, my son. What makes you think so?"

"Because you are so old, dear grandpapa. I always think, when people's hair turns white, it is like a crown of glory, and that they are soon going to get the one that Jesus gives."

"And what will they do with that, my child?"

"Throw it down before Jesus; because, you know, they don't really deserve to have it. Will it always be left there, grandpapa, or will Jesus put it on their heads again and say, 'You may wear it, because I want you?'"

"I think Jesus will crown them with it again, my son."

The maid now came for the children. They were tenderly kissed by the aged man, and as he saw them leave, hand-in-hand, he blessed his God, that the child, of his Salome had found a home in so fair a heritage.

Ethelda saw him late that night, and she also talked with him of her that was gone.

"I know that I soon shall follow," said the Rabbi; "but since I have seen the Lord's Christ, with Simeon I can say, 'Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'"

In the morning the servant called him as usual. He did not move. He went towards the bed—all, all was still. The eye was fixed, looking upwards; the hands were clasped upon the heart. The expression was that of perfect peace; the clay tenement alone remained, the emancipated spirit had fled—had joined his sainted child and rested in glory.

Aunt Ethelda took the little Adah and Harry to see the lifeless remains. Adah hid her face in Miss Alleyne's dress and sobbed, whilst little Harry gazed thoughtfully for some time.

"I thought Rabbi Moses would soon die, auntie. How very happy he must be now!"

"Why, Harry?"

"He sees his dear Salome again, and my grandmamma, and baby Bertha, who is buried in the church-yard"—and the little boy's voice became more solemn, and his eye grew brighter—"and he sees Jesus."

"My darling children," said Ethelda, and she pressed each little one to her side, "may we indeed all see Jesus—see Him as He is, and be made like Him—glorious, blessed, holy!"

The newly-closed grave was again opened, and the aged Rabbi was laid beside his widowed daughter, "earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes."

Kindred dust was mingled there, and kindred spirits rejoiced before the throne. The children of Abraham had become partakers of a better covenant and of better promises. They possessed not the earthly Canaan, but they had entered the heavenly; aliens from their own people, they had become fellow-heirs with Christ and of the household of God.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SUMMER DAYS.

"Ever upward may we move,
Wafted on the wings of love:
Looking when our Lord shall come,
Longing, gasping after home!
There may we with thee remain,
Partners of thine endless reign;
There thy face unclouded see,
Find our heaven of heavens in thee."—MADAM.

MONTHS passed away, but the aged Moses and the loving Salome were not forgotten in the family of Alleyne. The white stone tomb was erected, and the words that the Rabbi had chosen were engraved, and each mountain-climberer that still remained felt that of those, who had once been fellow-pilgrims with them, some had reached the summit, had gained the prize, and had left behind for their encouragement the words, "Jesus said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Some fruitless efforts were made by Adah's relatives to bring the child again among them, but finding that this could not be achieved, the little one was left according to

the grandfather's written desire, to be brought up by Miss Alleyne. She and Harry grew together as fair trees in a well-watered heritage. The one was naturally gentle, loving, and persevering; the other was impatient, impulsive, and imaginative. They were both tender-hearted children, and both loved to hear stories of the Good Shepherd who careth for His little lambs; but Harry had most to combat with, and so he felt the more strongly his need of the Shepherd's help. He was oftener tempted, and so he cried the more for deliverance from the tempter's power. Loving and beloved, their life was a very happy one; and though the little Adah, with the inconstancy of childhood, soon ceased to miss the kind hand which from babyhood had tended her, Ethelda often spoke of her mother and grandfather; and the little children used to love to talk of them as being now in heaven. Sometimes they walked to Alleyne churchyard with their black attendant, and strewed white flowers over the graves of the departed. Sometimes they would remain there a little while, and then Adah would teach Boosa the letters off the grave-stone, and little Harry would try to be alone, and kneel beside the Rabbi's tomb, or near that of his grandmamma, and pray.

"Why does Master Harry do that?" Boosa one day inquired.

"Oh, Boosa dear! it is so sweet to pray beside the tomb. I like to do it; it makes me think of heaven; and heaven is so bright."

"Master Harry, I think the tomb is very dark."

"Yes, down there it is; but you know that is only the body's house. And then, when Jesus comes again, it will be no longer dark. The graves shall all open, and we shall see the bright, beautiful Saviour, and go up and up"—and the little boy raised his little hand as high as he could—"that way, Boosa, and meet Jesus in the air. I hope Jesus won't be very long in coming."

"But then, Master Harry, you must die first."

"No, no, Boosa, I needn't. It would be such a precious thing to be made like Jesus, you know, without ever dying; and the Bible says, that the live people shall be caught up in the clouds, and there meet Jesus, and all His people who have been dead."

The child was silent for a little while, and then said, "I'm just thinking of something; but I must ask Aunt Ethie about it, when I go home."

Harry did not think of it again till night came; and as he sat in his aunt's lap, after offering up his prayers, he said—"Auntie, dear, I wanted very much to ask you a question—If Jesus came now, would papa and mamma, who are in India, see Him as soon as we who are in England?"

"Yes, darling; for all shall see Him in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

"Oh! that will be nice. Then, perhaps, papa and mamma may first meet their little Harry in the clouds with Jesus?"

"And I shall see my mamma, too, and grandpapa," said the gentle Adah—"Shall not I?"

"Yes, my treasures; all who love the Lord below shall then meet and never part again."

Little Adah's sweet voice caught the last words, and she sweetly sang—

"We then shall meet at Jesu's feet,
And never part again."

As Ethelda kissed the sleeping children that night, she felt that they were God's messengers to rouse her own soul to high and holy things, and she thanked her God that so precious a charge was committed to her trust. She felt, moreover, cheered, for God's blessing resting on her work seemed a token that the path, which she had chosen, was that of duty.

Rowland was at home for his long vacation. Never had Ethelda so enjoyed the society of her brother. He was no longer the schoolboy—no longer the child that needed instruction. By rapid strides he had advanced, until he now outstripped herself in scriptural knowledge. He delighted critically, as well as devotionally, to study God's word, and would often knock at the door of Ethie's little "snuggery," as she called a small apartment near the drawing-room, and there, with his Greek Testament, and two or three books of reference, would consult with her concerning the meaning of different, difficult portions of holy writ. Rowland was preparing heart and soul for the ministry. He felt the im-

portance of the high and holy calling which he was to enter, and would often say, "If, whatever we do, we should do it well, how doubly necessary it is, when there is before one the all-important work of winning souls for Christ, when one's business concerns not earth, but heaven!" And at other times he would say, "If God spare me to be a clergyman, I trust to be an out-and-out one. I want to be ultra-high, Ethie, in the best sense of the word,—over to ascend with the 'Excelsior' banner, till, the ascent gained, I lay it low at the feet of Jesus."

"God grant it, my own precious brother!" Ethelda would reply; and then she would imagine her brother the ordained minister, and picture him in the Alleyne pulpit, and fancy to herself the effect of his ministry. Suddenly she would check these thoughts, for she knew that they were vain, and would turn these visions of the future into prayers, or try to engage her mind with present realities. Concerning her own earthly future, there was always some measure of sadness. She had not known that she had given her ardent affections so much to Sir Claude, as now when his visits became fewer and fewer, and a chilliness crept over his manner, which sunk her spirits and made her likewise continually more reserved.

Sir Claude, on his part, had felt intensely her refusal. At first he had hoped he might yet win her hand when the path of duty permitted, but he imagined that she grew more and more cold towards him; and then he remembered that she had not responded in the least to his expressions of af-

fection. "I used to think her interested concerning me, but so I should now be, with regard to any one, who, lost in the mazes of infidelity, was inquiring concerning the God of Scripture. Ethelda is too good for me. I have never won her love, and now I cannot attempt it." Then the young Christian would feel that this trial was permitted by his heavenly Father, and rightly ordered, lest, with his cup of earthly bliss too full, he should not thirst for the fountain of living waters; lest, with the bower on the hill-side too pleasant, he should, like the pilgrim in Bunyan's story, slumber and lose his roll. He endeavoured to forget his visions of earthly happiness, and whatsoever his hand found to do, he did it with all his might. Often would he ride to the scattered neighbouring hamlets and gather together the few country people, and expound the word of the living God to many, who were too far from a church to think of ever entering its precincts. Amongst those who lived on his own estate he endeavoured to do good. He arranged that the wages should be regularly paid on a Friday evening, and that all his labourers should enjoy the Saturday half-holiday. Then, on Sunday evening, they were all collected in the large hall of the Priory, and he read with them the Scriptures. The housekeeper was to supply the wants of the sick and the necessitous; but in this it was he needed so much the counsel and influence of a wife. He had not the least idea what poor people wanted, either for food or for clothing. He spared no expense in making comfortable the cottages of his tenantry, and was ready to give shillings and half-

crowns to all who asked. But this was what the most worthy, and sometimes the most necessitous, would not do, and frequently Sir Claude was pained by hearing of a case of real distress, in his immediate neighbourhood, being unrelieved. His people, however, loved him much. They liked his frank, straightforward manner. They knew that they could trust him, for they knew that he ever consulted their interests before his own. They thought he had become "wonderful religious"—"so different to his father; but, indeed, it was better that way than the other;"—and "indeed it must be real, for he hadn't to make his bread by it." Thus spoke many, who cared themselves for none of these things; but there were others, who were pricked in their hearts, and inquired, "Why am I not concerned also?" "Does the servant need religion less than the master?" Edward Arnold was differently received now to what he was when he first appeared, the vender of Bibles and religious books. He was a welcome visitor, and always sold some of his wares. He was considered amongst them a learned man, and poor Nell had usually a question to ask about some difficulty in the Bible; whilst Joseph, the groom, an intelligent fellow, used generally to seek information on some knotty point in geography or astronomy. Edward was ever ready to answer, but his mind was bent in one direction,—he never forgot the object of his mission. Like the magnetic needle, place him as one would, he always turned to one point; and the pole with him, was the message given unto the apostle, "Be ye reconciled to God."

"Here, now," said Joseph to him, one day: "did you ever see the moons of Jupiter through a telescope?"

"No," said Edward, "I never was fortunate enough."

"But I have; and I want to know how that helped to tell the quickness with which the light moves?"

"Well, you know," said Edward, "that both we and Jupiter go round the sun in a kind of ring, or orbit; now, if we are both at the same side of the sun together, we are not so far away as when we are here and Jupiter is there; and the astronomers found that they saw the time when Jupiter's moons were eclipsed sooner when he was near to us than when he was far away, and so they reckoned the time, and they knew the distance between one side of the orbit and the other, and then they divided the miles across by the minutes. I forget the numbers, but I think it is nearly two hundred thousand miles a second that light moves."

"Now, that's a man, Edward; tell me that over again, and I think I'll understand."

And Edward explained it all, with greater care than before.

"Ah! that's wonderful! two hundred thousand miles a moment! That beats the railways hollow. One can't understand it quite."

"Very true, Joe. It makes one feel how little man can boast of, and how great He must be who said, 'Let there be light, and there was light!'"

"And sent it flying off at that rate! Have you any book which tells about the stars?"

"Yes, here is one—'Our Solar System'—two little volumes for one-and-eightpence."

"That's cheap enough, any way. I'll have them. When one reads about these things, one feels lifted out of one's self."

"Yes, without knowing somewhat about them, one can't quite understand the full meaning of 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handy-work.'"

"True," replied Joe; "but d'ye know the idea often comes across me, What made God care so for the people on this little bit earth? Can it be true that He did?"

"Yes, if the Bible is true. You know it is written, 'Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, to crown him with glory and honour.' That refers, I take it, both to the Saviour and the saved."

"Well, that's just my idea. It's very strange that Bible. There seems in it the thought of every living man."

"Because He who made the heart, made it. The stars above, and the heart within, and the book beside us, all tell, 'There is one God, and his name One;' and they all say, 'God is love,' and 'God is great:' but then the Book does what the others can't do, it explains it all."

"It would be well, I believe, if I thought more about it; but thank you, my man. I must off to the horses, now. Good-day to ye."

And thus Edward pursued his work ; sometimes in the hall of the rich ; sometimes in the cottages of the poor ; sometimes in the fishing-villages on the coast ; sometimes in the rural hamlets amid the moors. A light seemed to beam wherever he went, and his lamp lit many others. He often urged the young man to duty, or comforted the desolate heart. It was seldom that he had to hire a bed, or to purchase a meal. Oftener far he was obliged to decline the pressing hospitality of the simple people. And then he left the good behind him : he was but the sower of the seed, leaving it to spring up, he knew not how. His master knew. He watched it that had said, " My word shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereunto I have sent it."

One evening during that summer, Edward, somewhat oppressed with the heat of the day, rested on a stile, doubtful whether to " try the farmhouse " that lay across three fields, or to hasten onwards to the village, where he should rest. At last he determined on the former, and soon he knocked at the farmer's door. He heard an angry voice inside, and feared the reception that he might receive.

It was opened by a middle-aged woman, whose appearance was certainly not prepossessing. Her dress was very orderly, and her house appeared the essence of cleanliness ; but her features were very sharp, and her countenance extremely lowering.

" Well, sir, what's your errand here ? "

" I'm a peddler, madam, selling books."

"Books, indeed! Why couldn't you find your way to the back door?"

"I'm sorry I've come wrong; but I'll go round."

"Well, ye manna come through here, the passage is clean washed;" and weary Edward took up again his heavy pack, and found his way, somewhat circuitously, through the farm-yard to the back-door. Here, scouring the step, was a gentle-looking girl, whose eyes were somewhat red with weeping.

"Now, come in, and let's see what ye have. Ye can put down your books upon this table here." And Edward entered a kitchen, which certainly was brighter than the countenance of the mistress. The tops of the tables looked as if neither grease nor dirt ever stained them, and the pewter dishes that were arranged above the dresser were brilliant as a mirror.

"Now, what manners of books have you?"

"Bibles, ma'am."

"Umph! Bibles! is that all? we have plenty of them in the house already."

"I've prayer-books; also hymn-books, and several stories, and other things."

"I want a good-printed prayer-book. The one I have to take to church is over-small size. I know not what's come over my eyes. I don't see so well now. It can't be age, you know, so I won't try spectacles."

"Perhaps this may suit," said Edward, tendering a good-sized prayer-book.

"Yes, that might do. I like gilt-edges, though. What's the price?"

"Half-a-crown."

"A crown! That's too much. I'll give four shillings."

"I said half-a-crown, ma'am."

"Ah, half-a-crown is more like it! Let's see it. It's not so well bound as I thought. I'll give you two shillings."

"I never alter the price. Each book is marked in plain figures,—the lowest mark, or rather the only mark."

"Well, then, I will just give it. Now Mary, lass, is there anything you would like?"

Mary looked up timidly, and having wiped her hands she came forward. She was a remarkably interesting-looking girl, fair and bright-eyed, with delicate features. She looked as if her spirits were oppressed, and yet she smiled pleasantly as she approached. "I did wish for a hymn-book so very much, mother."

"Oh, yes, she does nothing, I dare say, but say prayers and sing hymns. Well, have you any hymn-books?"

"Many," replied Edward, "from one penny upwards. Here is a very neatly bound one for sixpence; and this one is tenpence. Is there any one you would particularly like?" he inquired, addressing the fair girl.

"I should like one with 'Rock of Ages' in it, and another hymn, 'Jesus, refuge of my soul.'"

"They are both in this one," said Edward, looking down the index.

"Then, mother, may I have it? I have a sixpence up the stair."

"Well, you may have it as a present. I dare say you will find a sixpence wrapped in paper and put in a box, at the furthest corner, on the right of the second top drawer in my bed-room,—the corner, you know, nighest the fire-place."

"Thank you, dear mother;" and with a look of gratitude the poor girl left the room.

"She is a fine-enough creature that," said the mother, with a look of conscious pride; "but it has cost me something to learn her tidiness; and I don't believe, after all, it's in her nature. Not that she is very bad neither, but she is terrible fond of reading, and I believe has all her father's books most off by heart."

"She seems fond of hymns—the two she mentioned are very beautiful ones."

"Oh, she is quite foolish about such. She is mighty particular about the Sundays;" but here Mary returned, and the mother stopped.

The money was soon paid, and Edward was going forward, when the mother, pleased with Edward's countenance, and still more with her purchase, which she really thought the cheapest thing she had ever seen, begged the young man to remain and take a cup of tea with her and Mary. Edward was very much pleased to stay. He was more

fatigued than usual that afternoon, having had but a slight dinner, and his journey having been long and hot. There was something about Mary, also, that attracted his interest. Perhaps it was, that the sour looks of the mother showed off to advantage the pleasant ones of the daughter ; but he certainly did feel a great wish to talk more with her about the hymns and books of which she was so "terrible fond."

Mary was told to make the tea, whilst the mother toasted and buttered a tea-cake, which she called "a wig," and then she got down the bacon, and broiled some slices of it before the fire.

Whilst thus engaged, Mary timidly asked Edward if he was going to the village ?

"Yes, I mean to sleep there to-night, please God."

"I wish you would call at the third house on your right. It is whitewashed, and some India cress grows near the door. Two old women live there. I think they might buy a large-print tract or two."

"Thank you for telling me," said Edward. "I'll gladly do it. Are there many about here that like this kind of thing ?"

"I don't know many. But one of those women is very ill, and does dearly like a bit of reading."

"Who reads to her ?"

"Old Nanny, her companion, when the light is good, and the print tolerably large."

"Does she like religious books ?"

"Oh, yes," said Mary. "She is too far down-hill for any other kind to lighten her."

"You know, then, the value of the Lamp of Life?"

Mary coloured.

"Yes, sir, I hope, something; but I fear I'm too dull-sighted to see it all."

"But you're following on to know the Lord? Don't be cast down. Look straight ahead—the eye fixed on the Saviour, who has loved you; and you shall some day see Him as He is."

Mrs. Patterson, for that was the name of Mary's mother, now came in. Her temper continued tolerably placid during tea-time, and she seemed to like Edward's pleasant conversation.

"You'll call in again, when you are this way, young man; and if you could bring with you the story of Robinson Crusoe, I want it for my youngest boy, Nat."

"I'll try and remember it," said Edward. "Good evening, ma'am, and thank you kindly."

"Good evening. Mary, you can let him out by the front door, and through the garden gate, and show him the way to the village, across the field."

Mary was pleased to go: and Edward spoke to her a few more words of Christian counsel.

"Good night! don't be down-hearted. It's all up-hill work; but there's One that watches to see we don't faint. Good night! I'll look in again, as your mother bade me."

"Oh, do!" replied the girl, artlessly; "I'm sure I like

it. Now that's the way," pointing to the path across the field, "and it's the third house to the right. Good evening, sir!"

"Good evening! and I'm sure I like it," said Edward to himself. "I never saw such a nice girl as that;" and then the prayer arose from his heart, that He who had guided him from boyhood hitherto, might lead him right, when the time should come to choose a fellow-pilgrim to share his toils and his joys in his way towards Zion.

"I know little of her yet," he thought; but what he heard from the old woman made him like her more; and after three hours spent in evening work in the village, telling to all around of the Bible and its story, and selling copies of the sacred volume and of good books in many a cottage home, he laid himself down in peace to rest; but as he dreamt he was continually in the presence of the gentle Mary, and of her cross-looking mother.

Many weeks did not pass before the farm-house was visited again, and Edward was welcome. The "master-man" was at home—kind-hearted and intelligent, but altogether without an interest in Christ, or care for his soul. Edward was asked to remain and sleep in Jim's bed, who had gone to N—— for a few days. Before they went to rest, he proposed to read a chapter of the Bible; and he read of the nobleman who desired that his son should be healed. And then he spoke of the far greater anxiety that men should have for the salvation of the soul. As he concluded, he said,—

“And now, shall we not pray?”

The farmer and his wife arose, and the sons and daughter followed; and for the first time social prayer was offered in that little parlour, and the inhabitants of the farm-house began to call upon God.

Mary's heart especially rejoiced, because she had in secret often prayed, that to her parents the grace of God might be revealed; that in her family circle many might be found, who would choose the better part, and discover that religion's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FADING FLOWER.

"Perhaps it is an infant's lyre
Which waits for Him to raise;
Perhaps the songs of heaven require
An infant's voice of praise:
If it will bring more praise to Thee,
Then take him, Lord, in infancy."

It was one dull and gloomy morning in November. Rowland had returned to college a few weeks before; and some relations, who had been spending part of the autumn at Alleyne, had left for the south. Ethelda was in her little snugery, giving their morning lessons to the beloved children, who had found with her a home. To Harry they seemed more difficult than usual, and Ethelda thought that she had never seen the little fellow so fretful. At last, however, books were put away, and Harry, climbing on his auntie's knee, said,—

"Now auntie, dear, the precious Bible story, and let me lay my head upon your shoulder."

"Why, darling? are you not well?"

"I have got rather a headache, auntie. Do tell us about

the little boy that had a headache and died, and that Elisha made well again."

Ethelda complied, and little Harry fidgeted no more. He listened to all the story, and when Ethelda told him how the Shunammite said, "It is well," even when her darling child was dead, Harry looked earnestly at his aunt and said, "Could you say that, auntie, do you think, if Harry or Adah were to die?"

"I should ask God to help me, my precious boy."

"I think, auntie, if I were to die, I should just like to come back and tell you what heaven was like; I often wish Adah's mamma would come back and tell us."

"But Jesus has told us in the Bible about heaven, as much as it is good for us to know."

"But why did He not tell us more, I wonder? Do you think He wants to surprise us when we die?"

"Yes, Harry, I think it will be a glad surprise. And in the Bible it is said, that though we don't know what we shall be, we know that we shall be like Jesus. I suppose, like what Jesus was at the transfiguration."

"Oh, then, auntie, we shall have bright clothes on, shining like the sun! or perhaps Harry will be more like a little star."

"And Adah like another little star," said the gentle Jewish child.

"Yes, darlings; there is a verse that says, if we try and make many people love God, we shall be like the stars that shine for ever and ever."

"Then I must grow up to be a man first, auntie. I wonder if I shall be a missionary man? But I have got such a headache. What shall I do?" And he rested the little head, that had been raised, in his aunt's bosom. "My throat too, auntie, is so sore;" and Ethelda anxiously observed the crimson flushing of the cheeks and felt the hot, burning hands, for fever had already begun its ravages on that delicate little frame. The doctor pronounced it scarlet fever in a serious form, and the little boy was soon too ill to know or to notice anything.

Beside his bed, night and day, might be seen his black attendant, Boosa. Poor, faithful Boosa! He had left his home, and kindred, and country for the sake of the child, and now he feared the child was going to leave him. "Oh, Master Harry, if I could but die with thee! if I could but go with thee to see thy dear Jesus! But poor Boosa not fit. Boosa's sins too great to let him in at the golden gate. God would say, What does Boosa do here?" The little Harry was unable now to tell again, "Go to the blood of Jesus, that thy sins may be washed away;" and though Miss Alleyne did try to comfort and rightly to direct the poor, dark Boosa, he seemed as if he could receive no other idea than that Harry was going where Boosa could not follow.

At last the poor black man thought of praying to Harry's God, and going to a corner of the room, he laid his head upon the ground, and in an earnest whisper, with the tears running down his cheeks, he supplicated: "Thou great

God, to whom Master Harry prays—poor Boosa lies in the dust before Thee—wilt Thou make my young master well? May Boosa again hear his voice like the music, and see his eyes bright as the stars? Hear poor Boosa's cry, and he will ever lay low at the footstool of Master Harry's great God."

"Amen, Amen!" said Ethelda inwardly; but as she marked the difficulty of Harry's breathing, as she observed the constant wandering of his unconscious eye, and heard the low muttering of his incoherent words, her heart misgave her, and she felt that Jesus was come down to His garden to gather her beautiful and tender lily. Often, often did she put to herself the inquiry of the beloved child but a few mornings before,—“Could you say, ‘It is well,’ if Harry or Adah were to die?” It came now with a reality altogether different to what it did at the time when the child looked at her with the smile of health. She could only look up to heaven and say, “Father, teach me to be willing, that not my will but Thine be done.”

Old Mr. Alleyne was sadly cast down. Harry was his only grandchild, and the old man loved him as a son of his old age. And yet, to him the trial had not the intensity, that it had to his aunt. His greatest trial was past, when she who was pre-eminently the desire of his eyes was removed; and though he felt how sad the house would be if the merry little Harry were gone, yet he said, “Soon I shall go to him, though he shall not return to me.”

The tender-hearted Adah seemed as if she were des-

tined to be a child of sorrow, and acquainted, even from infancy, with grief, and sickness, and death. She was, of course, wholly separated from Harry, and her usual bright smile was only seen when she had gathered a nosegay of the few flowers that remained, and begged the nurse to give them to Aunt Ethelda for the darling Harry. Often she would cry, because she was not allowed to go into his room. "I think, nursie dear, I could put his pillows right, and help Auntie Ethie to bathe his dear, little, hot feet with Eau de Cologne." And then, when reminded that she could pray for him, she would go to her own little bedside and pour out the infant's simple petition to her Father in heaven.

Five days had passed since Harry's sudden seizure. It was nearly midnight, and Ethelda sat alone by the bedside. Boosa, who watched with her, had gone down-stairs for a fresh supply of port-wine jelly. The dear child had been for some time asleep—a restless, moaning sleep, the eyelids not altogether shut, and the delicate features so drawn that Ethelda started whenever the sound of breathing varied, fearful lest the spirit should then escape its tenement of clay. Gently he opened his full blue eyes, and they rested on his beloved aunt. "Darling auntie," the little one whispered, "pray!"

"What for, my treasure? that you may live?"

"No, auntie, that I may love Jesus!"

The child could not say more, and Ethelda knelt down by the bedside, and earnestly besought the Lord, that, living or dying, her Harry might love Jesus. She then gave

the port-wine jelly, which, she imagined, he swallowed with rather less difficulty, and the beloved one turned over on his other side and fell asleep.

After two hours he awoke again. There were no symptoms of delirium, but extreme prostration of strength. He took more jelly and looked refreshed.

"Darling auntie, I am so happy!"

"Why, my precious one?"

"Jesus loves little Harry, and takes such care of him. I have been dreaming about the beautiful, bright angels."

"Do you wish to be with them, Harry?"

"Yes, auntie; and with Jesus. Tell me a pretty hymn."

And as Ethelda repeated one of his favourite ones, the child once more fell asleep.

Hoping and fearing alternately, his aunt watched him till the dawn of morning. She dared hardly believe that recovery was possible; but when the servant drew up the blind and partially admitted the early light of morning, she perceived, that the rigidity of expression she so dreaded had passed from the features of the beloved one, and that he lay sleeping with the gentleness of the infant babe. Longingly she watched for the doctor's morning visit, and when he pronounced that the disease had taken a favourable turn, for the first time Ethelda broke down. It was joy, that, weakened with watching, she could not bear. She hastened to her own room, and praised her God; with many tears, for His abundant loving-kindness. She prayed for

Harry, and petitioned that the tender plant, if spared, might grow up a tree of righteousness of the Lord's planting—that it might, by prolonged life, bring forth far more ripened fruit; she prayed, as the infant had requested, that he might love Jesus—that he might ever be the lamb of the pasture, until he should become the lamb of the fold.

Some days passed before fear of danger was removed. Symptoms of dropsy had supervened, but these, through mercy, disappeared; and though the little frame seemed more delicate than ever, all cause for immediate alarm had passed away.

Little Harry, in his warm flannel dressing-gown, was one evening lying on his aunt's lap. He had been looking at pictures, but soon wearied, had nestled himself within her loved arms. "This dear, cosy place! Oh, auntie! I am always so comfortable when you hold me like a baby."

And then he was silent for a little while. At last he said, "I wonder, auntie, why I was allowed to be so ill, and yet not to die? I thought that people, when they were very ill, always died."

"Not always, Harry. Do you remember how ill auntie was once?"

"Yes, but then that was an accident. Do you know, auntie, *why* I have been so ill?"

"I don't know all the 'why,' Harry, but perhaps it was to make you understand that pretty verse you learnt before you were ill: 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of

the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

"Was being so ill, like being in the valley of the shadow of death?"

"Yes, darling, it was."

"Oh, then, auntie, Jesus was really with me. He made me happy. Do you think God made me ill for anything else?"

"To teach Auntie Ethie, and papa and mamma too, that their darling boy is just lent them, and God, to whom he belongs, can send for him whenever He likes; and Harry, I think God has taught Boosa that He is the great God, for Boosa now says he will never pray to an idol again."

"Does he, auntie?" and the tears filled the little boy's eyes. "Then I am very, very glad that God made me ill!"

Harry's illness was a dark day to the mountain-climbers, but it caused one to take up his pilgrim-staff and commence the ascent; it led another to be yet more disentangled from earthly things, and to press forward to the land where purified affection shall fear no rendings; and it hastened the little sufferer's feet to a point of view whence he saw heaven more plainly, and learnt to love God more perfectly. Harry's religious feelings were deepened, and more perseveringly the infant pilgrim sought henceforward to follow Jesus.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL.

Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings,
Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things
To heaven, thy native place.
Sun, and moon, and stars decay,
Time shall soon this earth remove;
Rise, my soul, and haste away
To seats prepared above."—MADAN.

A BRIGHT June sun had been shining all day, and was turning westward in its course, when Ethelda rode up to the station to meet her beloved brother Rowland, as he returned from college. She rode on Jeanette, and the servant led Dapple Grey, and Harry and Adah were, as usual, her little companions—mounted on their gentle black ponies, Tiny and Gipsy. They knew the corner where the horses would stand undisturbed by the noisy train, and had waited but a short time when the whistle was heard; and then the train approached—and then it stopped—and then it was off, off, further north. There seemed to be some delay. Ethelda feared her brother had not arrived. "But I think he must have come, auntie, or Ferguson would be

back," said the little Harry; because Ferguson, who had come up with a cart for the luggage, was on the platform to meet the traveller.

"I hope he has come," said Adah, looking rather mournfully at the pretty flags she and Harry had fastened into their saddles.

"Oh! yes, there is Ferguson with a box: but it isn't Rowly's box."

"It is Hubert's!" exclaimed Ethelda; and in another minute, Hubert came bounding towards her, and with tears of joy she stooped from her horse and kissed the bronzed cheek of her sailor-brother. The tears were in Hubert's eyes also, and for a little while something choked him, and he could not speak. At last he said, "Well, Ethie, my girl, and how are you? You did not expect to see the old sailor-boy this morning; did you? And how is our father?"

"Quite well, dearest. But how have you come? And how are you, my darling fellow?"

"Oh! I'm well and hearty as can be. And here you are on old Jeanette still. And how are you, George? And what are these two young ones?"

George touched his hat, and looked well pleased; but the children seemed a little afraid and surprised, as if they could not quite understand Aunt Ethelda kissing any one but grandpapa and Uncle Rowly. "This is our Harry and that the little Jewish Adah."

"And where is Gerty?"

"She is in London, and we expect her home to-morrow."

"I wish I had known that, I might have brought her down with me. But, you are forgotten to-day," he said, turning to Rowly; "just, I suppose, like the moon when a comet makes its appearance."

Rowland did not feel forgotten. Compared to the time of Hubert's separation, he felt as if he had seen his sister but yesterday. To the children, however, the sight of him gave fresh spirits.

Hubert and Rowland soon mounted Dapple Grey and Rollo, the groom's horse; but they did not canter. There was too much to talk about, and Hubert was already making friends with the two little strangers. When they had alighted, he was soon beneath the old elm-tree, with the children upon his knees.

"What do you call your flag, Harry?"

"It is the Union Jack; but I call it Uncle Hubert's flag. Adah's is Uncle Rowly's flag, and there is 'Excelsior' on it."

"Then you must have known that I was coming home. Did you, little one?" turning to the black-eyed Adah.

"No; but you know what one has, the other must have, so Aunt Ethelda made us both flags."

"And what does 'Excelsior' mean, Harry?" inquired Hubert, in a less careless tone than before.

"It means 'higher! higher!' You know we are all trying to get higher."

"Now, explain yourself, young man. Do you mean you are trying to get taller?"

"No, no. There is no use trying to be tall. It is higher—higher in *betterness*; getting up, up to heaven."

"And do you think, little Master Harry, you will be so good as to reach up to heaven?"

"No, nor any of us. But Jesus, who is quite good, can carry us up in His arms."

"Oh! then we have no trouble at all?"

"Yes, but we have; for we must fight with Satan, and you know he is always at us. Only Jesus helps us."

"Well, I see you are very well taught—quite a little theologian."

Hubert kissed the child with a low momentary sigh, and the little fellow looked at him very earnestly, inquiring, "What do you mean by thieffogigean?"

"You must ask your Auntie Ethie. See, there she comes."

The little fellow ran to her; but she, quite unable to understand his question, bade him go to the arbour, where supper was prepared for him and Adah.

She then sat beside Hubert, waiting for Mr. Alleyne's return, and talking over the many events of the last two years and a half. Though Hubert listened attentively, when Ethelda made any remark that referred to spiritual things, he never responded, but seemed glad to turn the subject of conversation. His manner towards her was most affectionate, and it was very evident that absence from home had not made the sailor's heart grow cold or insensible to its endearments. Mr. Alleyne's carriage was heard, and

Ethelda ran forward to prepare her father for the glad surprise, but found that she was forestalled by the children, who, jumping and skipping in all directions, were flourishing their flags and singing wildly their song of welcome to their uncles.

Ethelda could not help, as she saw their healthful countenances, thinking with thankfulness of her darling Harry's recovery from fever; but as she marked his delicate frame, she did not forget that the immortal spirit was caged in a frail prison-house.

The next day Gertrude arrived; the same matter-of-fact, simple, unaffected girl that she had always been. Hubert delighted to pet her as he had done before, and they again began cottage-building in the air.

"You see, Gerty, when I am an old man, and you an old woman, we will live in one of the snuggest little cottages that can be built."

"Yes; but then we don't know that we shall be old."

"True, little Matter-of-Fact; but then, if it should be so, it would be a thoroughly English cottage—no French garden, nor American shrubbery, but the dear old English plants—furze, and lilacs, and laburnums, and roses, and honeysuckles, and mignonette; and you will keep it, you know, Gerty, in apple-pie order, and it will be a regular snuggery for the bachelor and old maid."

"But if I should not be one, Hubert, what then?"

"Oh, fie, Gerty! you planning desertion already! I did not expect that from you. What then? Then I would

cease to be a bachelor, too, or else go again to brave the battle or the breeze. I would never live alone."

"Why, I think it would be rather comfortable."

"No, thank you; to be always shut up to one's own thoughts, that would never do. And to have no one to talk to! Oh! I hope I am not living to be a miserable, lonely old man."

"But all lonely old men are not miserable. There is old Colin in the cottage. Poor, blind Jeanie died last winter. His face always reminds me of a sunbeam."

"Indeed! I should like to know how. It is not far from here; we will go and see him."

And soon Gertrude and Hubert opened the outer gate and saw old Colin, who was seated on a little wooden stool, beneath a sort of arch of honeysuckle, leaning forward on his strong walking-stick.

"Good afternoon, Colin," said Gertrude. "I have brought my sailor-brother to see you."

"And I'm right glad. I hope you're well, sir."

"Very well, thank you," said Hubert, gently shaking the old man's hand. "Now, don't disturb yourself, I'll get a seat;" and whilst Gertrude brought a little chair out of the cottage, the young lieutenant found the root of a tree, which answered his purpose.

"And how have you been, Colin, since I saw you?"

"Very well, thank the goodness and grace of the Lord. Ye ken, sir, that I've lost my Jeanie?"

"So I was very sorry to hear ; and do you live all alone now ? "

"I have a grand-daughter married over yonder, and she comes every morning and sets me right. And, then, I'm never alone. I've the same presence that Joseph had."

"Then you are happy, Colin ? "

"Well may I be that, sir. I have nothing to do a' the day long, but think of my Lord. These puir e'es may look down, for the back is sair bent ; but the other e'es look up, and my Lord is bringing me up. Ah, sir, the ship is near its haven now, and I've got the Pilot sure on board."

"Ah, Colin, I wish I were like you."

"Like me, sir !—a puir sinner saved by grace. Ye can soon be that, for my Lord never sent awa' one soul that came to Him."

"But you were a wild one at my age, weren't you ? "

"It's weel to remind one of the quarry whence he was hewn ; but I tremble, sir, when I think how near I was being lost. God's arm pulled me out of a pit that was nigh as black as hell. Oh, sir, what would poor Colin give if he could now spend youth's days for God ! " The old man's voice trembled much, and he raised the back of his withered hand to wipe his tear-dimmed eye.

"Don't be so distressed, Colin," said Gertrude. "You'll have, I trust, a long time to serve God in heaven."

"True, ma'am,—eternal days : but this is the proof-time, and my best days were spent in fighting not for, but against my God. It is eternity that makes time a thing so

wonderfu'. A seed would be nothing, were it not that the tree is in it. However, I may well thank God that He has spared me longer than most men. But, Mr. Hubert, if an old man may speak, he says,—Begin betimes to serve the Lord. The mount is steep. Climb it when ye're young."

"Thank you, Colin. I'll try and not forget what you have said. But don't think that I've begun climbing yet."

"Oh, then, *now* sir, *now*!" answered the aged man, as he tightly held the dear gentleman's hand; and as Hubert and Gertrude left the garden, old Colin mused,—“Ah, he is not far from the kingdom of heaven!” and he prayed, “Take him in, Lord; take him in.”

The voice often rang in Hubert's ears,—“Oh, then, now, sir, now!” and often the wish rose in his heart that he, too, were like Ethie and Rowland. The religious impressions which he had felt during the early part of his voyage had been deadened, and now he struggled more than before against the truth. He was very ambitious of worldly distinction; and his frank, manly air, his courage, and his ability had enabled him to progress more rapidly than he could have expected. He was a mountain-clamberer; but the summit whither he sought to ascend was human greatness, not Divine glory. He was much struck with the difference in Rowland.

“I can hardly believe that is Rowly,” he said one day to Ethelda. “I used to think him rather a selfish, sulky fellow, and now he is so different. One thing, he is regularly

a young man now, and a clever fellow, too. He is rather too quiet, but I do like him. He is sterling good."

The tears came into Ethelda's eyes as she heard this praise of her favourite Rowland.

"He is," she replied; "and you will like him the better the more you know him. Don't you think he will make an excellent clergyman some day?"

"Oh, yes. He is the very man for it. I wish all our parsons were like him. I shouldn't care to be a little more like him myself, but I suppose it is not in my nature."

"No, not to be quiet and plodding like him. But you said he is quite different to what he was; why should it not be so with you?"

"Oh, Ethie, dear, I can't: so there is an end of it;" and he left the room.

Ethelda's heart ascended in prayer:—"Lord, thou canst;—for the glory of Thy name, change our Hubert's heart."

"I must be off again in a week," said Hubert one morning at breakfast. "I wanted to see your sandhuts, Rowland, and I wanted to ride over to Laverock Priory to see Sir Claude. Won't you both go with me to Laverock to-day?" he said, addressing his brother and sister.

"I dare say Rowly will, but I don't think I can."

"Why, now? What is there to keep you? You are not afraid of the bachelor, are you?"

"You are an impertinent creature, Hubert!" said

Ethelda, colouring. "I don't wish the children to miss their lessons in the morning."

"Oh! then we can go in the afternoon."

"I have to walk down to the village, then, and see the vicarage gardener. I have promised some plants for their new walk."

So Ethelda excused herself, but her heart was heavy as her brothers rode off. There had arisen a certain degree of coldness between herself and Sir Claude. He imagined that she avoided his society, and he was too sensitive to presume for a moment, when he thought that his presence was irksome. Yet, whilst he could not help loving her, she felt more and more that her earthly happiness had been bound up in his, and there was frequently a sadness over her spirits that Rowland often perceived, but could not understand.

Sir Claude was at home, and received the young Alleynes in his handsome library. His ingenuous character suited Hubert well; and though they soon discovered that their separate objects of interest were very different, yet they seemed friends at once by a congeniality of disposition. Sir Claude mentioned, as they were leaving, a large room that he had had built, in which his tenantry might meet on a Sunday evening.

"I once thought," he said, "of turning the drawing-room, that used to be, into such a one, but I could not quite make up my mind."

"Of course not," said Hubert. "You don't mean to live in this place all your life without being married?"

"One can't marry *every*-one," replied Sir Claude, rather seriously.

"But if there is not *any* one that will suit, you must be difficult to please."

"Do you care for the notes of the chaffinch after listening to the lays of the nightingale?"

"Then you have heard a nightingale once? Don't despair. Surely this charming place will yet decoy her. Take my advice,—Keep your drawing-room, and live in hope."

"Can it be that he knows Ethelda cares for me?" thought Sir Claude. "He speaks so confidently that I think he must;" and the baronet's eye brightened, and he again imagined that he saw Ethelda gracing his drawing-room and benefiting his poor people. They visited the reading-room, neatly and thoughtfully arranged: comfortable seats for the old near the reader's chair; low seats for the little children; and chairs for the invalids where there was no draught.

"Won't you come over and read here some Sunday evening?" asked Sir Claude of Rowland. "I want some one to stir up my poor people."

"I fear lest I am not the man for that; but I will with pleasure come over and do the best I can. Perfect weakness is the back-ground that shows out perfect strength, and so I'll venture."

"That's right! Will you come next Sunday?"

"No. After Hubert goes away—Sunday week. Will that do?"

"Yes, quite well. I hope you will do us good."

"He is a nice fellow, that," said Hubert, as he and Rowland rode along. "It's a great pity, though, he isn't married. I'm sure I would be, if I were he."

"I think he is better as he is, than with a bad wife."

"Surely that is not the alternative. I was inclined to tell him, there was more than one nightingale in the wood. It must be so miserable living alone."

"I don't think so," said Rowland, smiling.

"Oh! you're a good fellow, and I'm a bad one," replied Hubert.

"No, indeed. It is just the contrary. You are better cut out than I am to make others happy."

"Not now. How is it, Rowly, you are such a different fellow from what you were?"

"I wish I was far more different; but it is God's doing. Do you remember Ethie singing 'Excelsior' one night, and our talking about the different mountains we might ascend? I remember so well her saying, 'Higher up earth's mountain leads to the slippery glacier. Higher up God's mountain leads to the Father's right hand.' God helped me to choose His own mount, and though I have often stumbled, He has held me up, and the longer I try the happier I am."

"And I," said Hubert, "have tried earth's mountain, and the longer I try the more unhappy I am. But I can't help it; it is my nature;" and he loosened his rein and galloped onwards.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A W E D D I N G - D A Y .

"Hark! how the birds do sing,
And woods do ring.
All creatures have their joy; and man hath his.
Yet if we rightly measure,
Man's joy and pleasure
Rather hereafter, than in present is.

Not that he may not here
Taste of the cheer;
But, as birds drink, and straight lift up their heads,
So must he sip, and think
Of better drink
He may attain to, after he is dead."

HERBERT.

As the nights were growing long, and the winds cold, and the trees brown, there dawned a day that seemed brighter than those that either preceded or followed it: a day when hearts were glad, and good wishes were breathed by many in the villages of Rotherburn and of Alleyne.

It was the bridal-day of Edward Arnold and of Mary Patterson. The wedding had been at the parish church of Rotherburn, and with scrupulous care the wedding-breakfast had been prepared at Allenwick farmhouse. It was not

more than three miles from Laverock Priory, and Sir Claude had taken special interest in all the arrangements. His gardener had supplied dahlias, and geraniums, and verbenas, to deck the rooms; and he was allowed to rob the greenhouse of its few white roses, that the bride might hold her own appropriate bouquet. His gamekeeper had also sent pheasants and partridges, and Mr. Patterson was well pleased to carve the baronet's game.

Edward and Mary had plighted their troth, and were wed; they had received the heartfelt congratulations of many friends, and the cheers of the villagers as they passed along, and now Mr. Patterson's old spring-cart was standing at the door to convey them to their future home. Jim and Willie, two of Mary's brothers, were trying to lift the bride's well-filled "kist" into the cart, when they saw advancing along the narrow lane that led to the farm-house, a little, strong, dark pony, drawing another cart. It had a seat and a rail across it, was painted green outside and white within, and was driven by Jim, the groom at Laverock Priory. As soon as it stopped, Jim jumped off, and entering the kitchen, shook hands heartily with Edward and Mary. "Here are my own best wishes first, Arnold," said the honest man; "and, Mrs. Arnold, many and rich years of good fortune and real happiness for you and yours. But I must give you my master's message. He's sent you a present, I cannot well bring into the room, but perhaps as ye're just ready to start, ye'll come outside and see it."

The wedding-party soon stood in the front of the house.

Jim quietly walked up, and stood by the pony's head. "Where is it? What is it?" each one whispered. The cart appeared empty, and nothing else was to be seen, save Tray the dog, Grey the cat, and many hens and chickens, all of which were natives of the place.

"Well, man, where is it?" Mr. Patterson soon inquired, aloud.

"Walk round here, Arnold, and ye'll see," answered Jim, with a broad look of pleasure.

Edward and Mary walked round, and soon they read, neatly painted on the new spring-cart, "Edward Arnold, Book-hawker."

"Now, then, do ye understand? The cart and the pony, and the harness and the whip, are the master's presents, and he bade me say, he hoped you would drive up to the Priory with it, as ye passed on your way home. You need not mind to drive it, for it's gentle as a lamb." Edward had no words to reply, but Jim, enjoying the surprise of the assembled party, turned now to the brothers, and said:—

"Look now, I'll help you with that kist there: ye will not want this cart the day." And with a little contrivance, he placed the "kist" and some smaller packages in the new vehicle.

"Now, good-day. Don't come over-quick, or I shan't get afore you to the Priory;" and off was Jim with a heart well-nigh as pleased as though he had been the owner of the bride, of the pony, and of the cart.

Mary had re-entered the house, and someway she lingered, she knew not why. Her feelings were mingled; so varied and so strong that they quite overpowered her, and she sought a quiet room to weep. Her future was bright, as bright could be—not one speck upon its wide horizon. Her husband, the man whom she loved, whom she honoured, with whom in sentiment she was one. Perhaps it was its very happiness that made her cry. The past had with her been cloudy. From those of her own household she had had no sympathy in her inmost feelings; and often had she trembled, and often had the tear started into her eye, through the unkindness and hard language of her mother. Yet she had loved her home—she had felt the joy of making her father happy, of pleasing her brothers: and they who for others reflect sunlight, must receive some of its rays direct. And then she, moreover, knew, that though her mother spoke so crossly, she was still her friend and her counsellor; and she felt conscious how much she would miss the interest, that mother took in all that concerned her. The bride had disappeared—her mother sought and found her leaning against the bed, where she hid her weeping eyes.

“Why! Mary, my honey, but you mustn’t take on this way! Your man is waiting for you, and it wouldn’t do to give him a weeping bride. You needn’t rue your step already! it’s done the now, and can’t be mended.”

“Oh, no, mother; I don’t rue it, indeed I don’t: but someway every body is so kind to us. It shows how Edward’s

thought of. He's just far too good for me. But, mother, there's something too about leaving home, when it comes to the push."

"But Mary, lass, it's for us, not you to think of that. You get a husband, but we lose our child. However, we'll come over and see you. Let's see, Monday is the churning. I'll try and get over on Tuesday, and bring you some of Daisy's butter."

"Oh, thank you, dear mother, thank you! Edward and I wanted to give you and father a present before we set off; but I felt so shamed like—that cart and pony quite upset me. D'ye think they'd come up here? it's but a little thing, mother."

Mother soon called Edward and father, and Edward placed a small square parcel in her hand. "Don't open it till we're off. You've given me the real child; I couldn't do less than that. But now, before we start, shan't we ask an Almighty Father's blessing?"

"I thought you wouldn't go without some prayer, and I dare say you're right," said the father.

So Edward knelt down and prayed for blessings on their kind and honoured parents, and on themselves; and prayed for an eternal meeting in that blest world, where they neither marry nor are given in marriage.

"Now Mary, lass, ye'd better go," said the father; "bid your mother good-by;" and he led her down stairs, and each brother kissed the bride and said something cheerful, but it was with an effort that they did so; and then the

father kissed her the last—"Good-by, my bonnie girl." And as he shook hands with Edward—"She is worth something; mind you care well for her. May God bless you both!" And the bride and bridegroom drove away amid the cheers of the little group in the farm-yard.

Mary's face was bright as usual when they reached the Priory; and pleased were they to thank Sir Claude, and to receive his frank and heartfelt congratulations. When they reached the village of Alleyne in the dusk of the evening, a surprise awaited them that they had not expected. The village-boys had made a bonfire on the Castle-hill, and as the little spring-cart approached, raised a hurrah so loud and so hearty, that if Sheltie had not been as quiet as Jim had described it, a serious accident might have resulted. It was an expression of welcome, real, natural, unstudied—a sound that told Mary how much Edward the colporteur, the Sunday-school teacher, the poor man, and the poor-man's friend, was valued in his native village. The church bells rang merrily as they drove down the street, and now they came to the neat cottage near the river-side, which was to be Edward's future home. The children had made that day with evergreens, and mountain-ash, and snow-berries, a little triumphal arch, and six coloured lamps were placed in it, and on its summit a small transparency, arranged by Isa and Mary Graham, in which "Love" might be traced. Inside the cottage a supper of welcome was prepared by the bridegroom's friends, and near the head of the table sat

good Mr. Graham. The tears stood in Mary's eyes again, but they were now tears of unmingled thankfulness.

When supper was over, a gentle knock was heard at the door, and then there walked in the twelve boys of Edward's class, headed by our old friend Peter M'Gee.

They all made a salute, somewhat in military style, and Peter being spokesman came forward.

"We wished, sir, to tell you how right glad we all were that ye've got so fair and good a bride, and we wish you every happiness the Lord of heaven and earth can give; and ye know, sir, we cannot wish for more; and we hope, sir, ye'll just take this mark of our love." And, with a beaming countenance, he handed him a large and beautiful morocco-bound copy of God's holy word.

"Oh, boys, this is too much, too much!" said Edward, with heartfelt emotion.

"Oh, sir, say nothing about it," replied Peter. "Ye've given us the light—the book is only the holder. Ye've made us taste the kernel, the book is but the nutshell. Don't say aught about the thanks. They're all on our side. Ain't they, boys?"

The boys with one voice answered, "Yes, sure they are—yes, yes!"

"Then if I musn't say thanks to you, my dear fellows," said Edward, "I must thank Him, who has showered down His mercies this day on me and mine. Such undeserved mercies the whole day through! And, boys, I must ask you to pray for your old teacher, Arnold, that he may in-

deed be grateful; that he and his dear bride here may always look right afore them to a brighter land than this can ever be, to a more hallowed marriage-supper than the one of this night; and that, looking forward we may go forward, and never tire till we are safe arrived at the heavenly Father's home. Boys, you'll pray for us, and we will pray for you, that this sacred volume may be a light unto our path, for there is no other way to guide our feet aright."

Then Mr. Graham knelt down and prayed, and all in the cottage knelt, and the best blessings were supplicated; and Edward and Mary took courage, for they felt that Heaven's sunshine beamed on the first step of their married life, for they believed that the Hearer of prayer would assuredly bless their union, and make it unto them that fountain of joy, which should strengthen them to ascend with gladder feet the mount of God, the heights of Zion.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE MOUNTAIN-TOPS APPEARING.

"The golden palace of my God,
Towering above the clouds I see,
Beyond the cherubs' bright abode,
Higher than angels' thoughts can be.
Conduct me, Thou life-giver, there,
Conduct me to Thy glorious throne!
And clothe me with Thy robes of light,
And lead me through sin's darksome night,
My Saviour, and my God."—BOWRING.

THE north wind had been blowing bitterly all the morning, gathering instead of dispersing the clouds that, charged with snow, seemed at length noiselessly to shake their hovering wings, and let their downy flakes descend upon the frozen earth.

The snow fell thick and cold, spotless and silent, covering the visible world with a sheet of uniform purity—an emblematic foretaste of the time when it shall again be decked in robes of righteousness, and peace shall flourish throughout its borders.

On this inclement day might have been seen, rapidly crossing the little piece of moorland that formed a portion of the road between Alleyne and Laverock, Sir Claude

Wentworth upon his fiery steed. The horse appeared to care for the weather more than the rider did. He seemed almost insensible either to the snow-drift or the blast, and there was on his countenance an expression of happy satisfaction which it had not lately worn,—there was the removal of the anxious doubt that had for so long somewhat overclouded it. Sir Claude had ventured again to tell Ethelda of his unchanged love, and she had, with a tear that she could not repress, acknowledged how she cared for him, though she positively refused to allow him to enter into any engagement with her then, since more than a year must elapse before her way could be made clear to leave her father's house. Still she loved him, and thus he could look brightly forward through future years; and thus he saw before him a sunny portion of the way, cheered by her presence who was the dearest object of his earthly affections. He was very jealous lest this bright sunbeam should dim the yet more perfect light in the distance,—lest this beautiful vista should distract his eye from the yet more transcendent glories of the land beyond the grave,—lest the delights of the creature should cause him to forget the perfections of the Creator. He watched against this temptation, and God kept him, so that he was not ensnared.

Since that bleak and dreary day, in Sir Claude's estimation the brightest of that long period, twelve months had again passed away, and the year was commenced that would probably see many changes in the family at Alleyne. So far as man could prognosticate, they would be changes

bright and happy, and Ethie and Rowland sat up till long after midnight, looking back upon the past and speaking of the possible future.

"I often think," said Rowland, "that these Newyears' mornings are milestones on a hill. We may rest on them for a little while, and look back on the way that God has led us; and then we may look forward, and endeavour through the mist to discern the outline of the leading points in that unknown country, which we are about to enter."

"Yes," replied his sister; "it is quite clear behind, and therefore, no doubt, it is more profitable to retrace the steps we have been led. I dread looking forward into the future. The mist is so thick, even when we imagine the outline is discernible, that we are very apt to make mistakes. Should we not try to be content with the assurance that it is our heavenly Father who knows and orders our appointed lot?"

"True, Ethie; but hope will some way paint, with perhaps fancy colours, the bright pictures of the future. I own that I am looking forward very much to leaving college, and entering the ministry of my God and Saviour, and proclaiming from the pulpit the message of redeeming love; and all, I hope, before the end of this year. And then, Ethie, tell me candidly, are you not looking forward, too, to bright days at Laverock Priory?"

"Ah, but Rowly, life is always uncertain!"

"And will brighter days still, in the kingdom of our Father, be a disappointment, Ethie? Will serving in the temple above be a meaner service, than in the courts of the

sanctuary below? The uncertainty of life should surely not cost the Christian one tear. 'He hopes a better rest to find.' "

"True, Rowly. Faith in Jesus does, indeed, make a wonderful transformation in all our feelings. I have often thought of that on reading the beautiful verse, the addition sum of the Christian's possessions,—'All things are yours; life and *death*, things present, and things to come:' the very figure that *subtracts* all happiness from him who knows not God, is the figure that *adds* to the completeness of His children's joy. We forget our possessions; we do not often enough count them over."

"Don't you think, Ethie, Christians must disappoint Jesus more than the ungodly? We do not hear of one look of sorrow when Judas betrayed; but when Peter denied, then, amid all His personal sorrow, the 'Lord turned and looked.' I feel we need to aim at higher holiness—to press more earnestly forward—to pant after closer communion with Jesus; not to grovel on earth, but to have our citizenship, our hearts, our lives where Jesus is."

"Yes, Rowly," replied Ethelda; "but how can we attain?"

"Oh! I think it is, by looking very little down, very little within; not measuring the ground we have trod, but always looking up—always looking onward. I remember, when at school, it was a bad way to learn lessons, by counting how many lines I had mastered."

Before the brother and sister parted on that early

morning, they knelt together, and each one prayed. They prayed for much strength, for close communion with their God. They told Him of their helplessness, and supplicated that His power might hold them. They laid before Him all their aspirations, and pleaded the promise, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." Their petitions were large, but they knelt before a King: their entreaties were urgent, but they prayed as needy supplicants. If they should live, their earnest longing was to live for God; if they should die, it was to rest in Jesus.

Strengthened for the new campaign, prepared for its conflicts, and armed with Heaven's own armour, Rowland and Ethelda rose from prayer. It was not probable that they should kneel together when another year would dawn, but they trusted, when years would become eternities, and faith's fleeting hours would all have passed, that they should kneel before the throne of glory, and that the fellow-pilgrims of the early portion of the way should become the co-inheritors of that land which is far beyond the clouds and mists of earth.

Among the bright anticipations of the family at Alleyne, as the new year dawned, was the return from India of the father and mother of the little Harry, and his infant sister, a dear, tender child of three years old. Harry's eyes would kindle with pleasure as, in imagination, he went over and over again, the first sight of his beloved parents, and the first kiss that he should imprint on the soft, pale cheek of the little Beatrice. And yet, as he continued his childish

train of thought, a sadness would cloud his bright eye, because he knew it was but the prelude of his separation from his beloved Aunt Ethie, and his little friend of the children of Israel. At such times, when all alone, the tears would gather, and the boy's head would be pressed against the table, and there remain in a long unbroken reverie. But ere he raised it, the brightness he needed was restored. That young heart had held communion with Him who changeth never, and he felt, that though he should no longer feel the close sympathy of that heart, which had, almost from his earliest recollection, shared every joy and every sorrow, yet that Jesus would not leave him; and in the expectation of parting from her who had been the staff of his infant pilgrimage, the child looked onward with more longing eyes, and raised upward his more earnest hand, that the eternal God might guide and guard his young footsteps in the heavenly race. Harry left the creature for the Creator, and ere that year had closed, he was conscious of increased strength—of more successful struggles—of more rapid progress.

Percy Alleyne had not seen his father nor his father's home for twelve years. As he approached England, his heart warmed more and more towards the scenes and friends of his childhood; and when he reached London, he felt an impatience of spirit he could not repress, so that, leaving his wife in the south, he hastened homewards. The bright green buds of May were decking the lately leafless branches, and as he walked along the lanes—for no one knew that he

was coming—his heart bounded with joy, to recognise again the old favourite hawthorn, and the bright, but delicate stellaria. As he passed Alleyne church, he took the road that led through the grave-yard, and turned aside for a few moments, to stand beside the grave of his sainted mother. The "Lamb as it had been slain," arrested his attention, and as he lingered there, he heard near him the voices of children. He turned suddenly round, and saw standing beside a white tomb-stone a boy and girl, who appeared nearly the same size and age, but who did not look like children of the same family. The golden hair and bright blue eye of the boy contrasted with the dark glossy curls and deep black eye of his little companion. The children were looking at the tomb, and did not observe his presence.

"Adah, dear," said the little boy, "when papa and mamma come home, I should like to bring them here, and show them this grave and my grandmamma's grave; and you come, too, darling, and then we will tell them how your mamma and grandfather loved our Jesus; and then we will talk of heaven, where they all stand together. But what is the matter, Adah?"

The tears had gathered in the little girl's eye, and throwing herself on the grassy mound beside the tombstone, she cried as she had hardly ever done before.

Harry laid down beside her, and putting his arm round her neck, he said, gently, "Don't cry, my own dear Adah. You know it was God who wished them to be in heaven."

"Yes; but my papa and mamma will never, never come home to their little Adah,—and that makes me cry."

"But, Adah dear, you will go to be with them, and I am sure that is far better. Oh! I wish that we were all in heaven, and then we should all meet papas and mammas together; and Auntie Ethie would be there too, and not be going away to leave us." And the boy raised his head upward, and he gazed on the clear western sky, as if he would look through its azure veil, and see the heaven where Jesus is.

The sun had just set, and a few golden clouds floated lovelily in the horizon. The child's blue eye watered with the light that still beamed there, when, again turning to Adah, he said,—

"I have often thought, Adah, that those clouds are so like our dear friends who are dead."

"How, Harry?" asked the inquiring little child.

"They once were, you know, grey, rainy clouds—sometimes crying, like us; but now they are far away at the door of heaven's other side, waiting to float over a new world, but staying there with their golden robes, telling us how beautiful Jesus has made them. And I think I am not wrong, for the sun makes those clouds golden; and you know, in the Bible, Jesus is called the Sun of Righteousness. But now, Adah, let us look at grandmamma's grave, and then we must be home, or auntie will think that we are lost."

The children passed round, and were startled to see a stranger. He looked at them earnestly; he was aware they could not know him, and he felt the place was too sacred

suddenly to surprise such tender spirits. With a strong effort of self-possession, he walked away, but his heart yearned over the child of strange thoughts and of deep feeling, his own beloved Harry. He and they reached the old mansion together; he had gone by a shorter way, they had cantered homewards on their little ponies.

Dinner was over, and Ethelda was watching the return of the young ones, when she saw a stranger approach through one of the private walks. She watched him earnestly for a few moments, and then, with an exclamation of joyful surprise, she threw herself in the arms of her brother Percy.

Harry, who had jumped off his pony, immediately comprehended the scene, and running forward exclaimed, "It is papa! I'm sure it is papa!" and it was but a moment, when the long-separated father clasped again the boy, who was so precious to him. Kindred hearts beat one against another in that long embrace, but the tears did not rise in Percy's eye till, with his son standing beside him, he took again his sister's hand and silently expressed the gratitude a father's heart alone could feel. The little Adah was not present. Gentle child! she had gone to her sleeping-room, had read her evening psalm, and had sought especially the verse, "When father and mother forsake me, then the Lord taketh me up." She had hastened to undress herself ere the maid came in, and had buried in the pillow her weeping eyes. Ethelda forgot not the orphan in her Harry's joy. She sought the little child, and laying her head upon the pillow that was wet with tears, she spoke sweet and tender words.

of comfort, till Adah, reassured, clasped her adopted auntie, exclaiming, "Oh! it will be happy Adah, when I meet my own mamma at the feet of Jesus Christ, and we never part again. If Harry is so happy now, what will little Adah be then?"

With the blissful hope of this reunion, the dear Jewish child fell asleep, and she looked peaceful as before, though the heavy tear-drops still moistened her long, dark eyelashes.

Earth's reunion was the privilege of the joyous Harry; Heaven's reunion was the anticipation of the orphan Adah.

CHAPTER XXIX.

H A S T E N I N G O N .

"Awake, my soul, stretch ev'ry nerve,
And press with vigour on;
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,
And an Almighty crown."

ROWLAND'S college days were very nearly passed, and the hard work of the examination was almost over, when, by the side of the river, he and Stanley Gardiner, his special friend, strolled out together. One was preparing for the ministry, the other for the bar: but both were anxious to serve their common Lord and Master; both were determined, by the help of God, to be "Christ's faithful soldiers and servants even unto death."

"I suppose, Alleyne," said young Gardiner, "that you will soon put on uniform. I could almost envy you, but God has not opened my way for the ministry of the Church—I mean, the official ministry; for you know I quite hold that, in its highest sense, we are all a royal priesthood, and that

we all have not only a real, but an appointed ministry in the Church below."

"And I thoroughly agree with you. Divers graces and divers places in the Church militant. But as the Victoria Cross can be gained alike by the private and the general, so the crown of glory, and the 'Well done, good and faithful servant!' are alike for the minister and the people."

"All true: but there are some crosses that can only be gained by the commanding generals; and so there are some crowns that seem reserved for them who can, like Paul, write unto the churches,—'My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown.'"

"But ordination does not put that within our grasp," replied Rowland. "Is it not rather a life devoted to God, the will intent on serving Him, and seizing each opportunity that offers to snatch the brand from the burning? There is many a humble mechanic that will wear a nobler badge of glory than the ordained minister. I grant that my opportunities will be greater; but opportunities are not actions, position is not service."

"Yes; and opportunities are responsibilities, and position causes expectation, Alleyne. I am sure that the laity should pray earnestly for the ministry. Men like ourselves, but requiring special grace—cities on the hill—lights raised to high places."

"You will not forget me, then, Gardiner?"

"No, my good fellow. When are you to be ordained?"

"On Sunday week, if God permit."

"And you begin work at once?"

"Yes; I should fear to delay. Life is very uncertain, and I may have but a short time, ere I render the account of my stewardship. I like the idea of being curate amongst the people whom I already know, and the good old man, whom I hope to help, needs assistance. He is not so strong as he was. I hope to be the helping arm to him, and he will be the guiding hand to me."

"Ah! the lines are fallen to you in a pleasant heritage. But don't overwork yourself, Alleyne. You will need a rest. You are such a regularly plodding fellow."

"Not this summer; change of work will be itself refreshment. I expect to find the path so inviting, that I shall run and not be weary."

"I don't want to dishearten you, but remember, there will be many a thorn and many a sharp stone, that are not seen at the distance."

"I know; but there is a promise for every trial,—a balm for every wound,—a stretched-out hand for every difficulty. 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.'"

"Well, I cannot dim your prospect, and I would not."

"I know there will be clouds, Gardiner; but the sun will ever be behind even the darkest: and as I get higher up the mount, the clouds below will increase, and the clouds above will lessen, till at length I shall stand on its summit, and a cloudless heaven shall be around me. Not that I

shall myself attain. 'Ebenezer,' will be engraven on each stone of the cairn that marks the mountain's top."

"You talk like a traveller to whom distant things are coming near."

"And they are. How often I have longed for college days to be over, that I might be ordained! And one knows not, Gardiner, how soon earth's school-days may all be past, and we be called to the Father's eternal home."

"But perhaps, Alleyne, you have done as much good in the college as you will ever do in the parish. I, for one, can thank God that you were brought here."

The tear rose in Rowland's eye. "Then, Gardiner, wherever, whensoever, how long soever God chooses: only let us pray for one another, that we may each do the will of our Father."

Stanley Gardiner was one of the little knot of friends whom Rowland had by quiet influence rallied round him, for his college days had not been unfruitful in God's work. He was of too retiring a disposition to take the lead among those who were his equals, but there was a steady perseverance in his character,—there was an earnest simplicity in his aim,—there was an unobtrusive modesty in his demeanour, which had made Rowland universally esteemed, and by those who really knew him, sincerely beloved. He had, by quiet, consistent conduct, commended the religion he professed,—and when, on the last evening of his residence at college, he gathered his friends around him, they each felt that they were parting with a brother, whose advice, so

judiciously and kindly given, was indeed valuable; whose friendship, so constantly and unselfishly shown, could not easily be replaced. Rowland had turned into a right channel many a stream just gushing forth from the fountain. Rowland had rallied round the banner of the Cross many a soldier, henceforth devoted to the Captain of his salvation, but who had once halted between two opinions. He was as the breeze that passes onward, leaving its healthful influence on trees, and herbs and flowers; he was as the billow that reaches the shore, bearing on its bosom the richly-laden vessel. The breeze has gone, the billow has disappeared, but their work remaineth,—they have fulfilled their mission;—like the angels of God, they have done His pleasure.

* * * * *

The bells of the village church of Alleyne rang their Lord's day chime—the chime that tells not of sabbath rest, but of resurrection joy—that invites not to passive repose, but to active devotion. More country carts than usual had been drawn into the village that morning, and an increased number of passengers might have been observed crossing the meadows, descending the Castle-hill, walking along the footpath that followed the winding river, or crossing the bridge with its olden tower. Young Mr. Rowland was on that day to deliver his first message of reconciliation from the pulpit of Alleyne. He was known, and he was loved. It was he who visited poor Jamie Clark when he was dying,

—it was he who cared for the poor ragged children on the links,—it was he who taught at the Sunday school, and regarded the favourite Edward Arnold as his friend,—it was he whom the servants at Alleyne honoured, for he ever thought of their happiness and sought their welfare. He was one who considered others better than himself, and treated the poorest man, not with condescension, but with respect. Perhaps this was wherefore all thought him better than themselves, and were well prepared to receive the admonition which should come from his lips.

In the pew where the Alleynes sat, a large family circle was gathered; the venerable sire, who held fast on that day, with trembling hand, his gold-headed stick; the brother from India, who could scarcely yet realize that the little Rowly whom he had left was that tall, earnest young man, who was going to divide among an expectant congregation the Word of everlasting life; his delicate, simple-minded wife, who had conceived for the unobtrusive, sensitive Rowland, more affection than for any of her husband's other relatives; the sailor brother, returned once more to the home of his childhood, athirst for living water; the young Gertrude, delighting in the novelty of hearing her own brother preach; the little children, with feelings somewhat akin, only mixed in Harry's mind with a certain sense of awe, and a longing desire to stand in yonder pulpit also; and the sister, who had watched the boy with a mother's love, who had earnestly supplicated that grace might descend, who had for years anticipated the present hour. That sister's heart did beat

with strong emotion : it was poured out once more with an intensity of earnestness, that the Lord would be with her brother, that He would own his youthful ministry, and enable him in all things to adorn the doctrine of his God and Saviour.

The young soldier of the cross came forward, and his text was, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ ;" and he declared that glorious Gospel in the length and breadth of its expansion,—in the height and depth of its sufficiency. He spoke of good news to the aged, for it opened a vista of unending glory ; to the man in the prime of life, because it offered strength that would never decay ; to the young, for it gave a hope that could not fail. He spoke not only of salvation, but also of the Saviour,—not only of the conquest, but also of the Captain ; and then he urged,—“Be brave for Christ,—unfurl your colours,—declare your Captain’s name,—manifest whom you follow.” Once more Rowland spoke solemnly, entreatingly,—it was that his people would pray for him, that he might be faithful unto death, and then receive the crown of life.

During that evening, Ethelda and Rowland sat for some time together. The window of her little apartment was open, and admitted the sweet fragrance of the flowers which the refreshing showers of that summer-day were calling forth. Ethelda’s book had been for some time closed, and she was almost unconsciously following a long train of thought. She had been retracing Rowland’s life, and was then lingering on the scene in her mother’s chamber, which she still

vividly remembered, when the dying parent prayed that God might bless her motherless boy. She felt as if she had tracked the stream to its source, for from that prayer, itself the effect of heaven's showers, had flowed the grace now so plentifully given to her beloved brother. The power of prayer was revealed to Ethelda in a way that she had never felt before. It seemed almost too mighty a weapon for the creature to wield; but then she remembered that He, who was Himself Omnipotence, had said, "I will pray the Father for you;" she knew

"Prayer was not made on earth alone;
The Holy Spirit pleads,
And Jesus on the eternal throne
For sinners intercedes."

"What were you thinking of, Ethie?" said Rowland.

"I was thinking of our mother's prayer for you, Rowly, when she was dying. That prayer has been answered, above what we could either ask or think; and shall it not be answered for our Hubie, too?"

"Yes, assuredly. Her prayer has risen up to God for a memorial; and if He could save a stubborn selfish fellow like myself, surely He will visit the open, generous heart of Hubert."

"I do not think natural temperament at all predisposes to grace. We often see that God magnifies His power in changing the most unattractive."

"True; I said wrong: but if Hubert once cast in his lot with us, would he not do it heartily? If he once began to climb God's holy mountain, would he not strive to attain the highest peak? Oh, Ethie, I cannot tell you how I long to see that noble fellow enlisted to fight the Christian's battle. I could not help thinking of him when I was preaching this morning."

"Dear Rowly, it is for us to pray, and it shall be done. God's grace is truly sovereign, but He has pledged Himself to answer prayer; little Harry's simple faith has taught me that. Let us pray, believing, and we shall see our Hubert the servant of the Lord's Christ."

"Either on earth or in heaven. How many glad surprises there shall be above—meeting those of whom, when we died, we stood in doubt! I think that in heaven there will be more whole family-gatherings than we expect. It is true, that we seldom see an entire family walking together along the narrow road; but God has different ways of bringing in His children, and don't you think, amongst spirits made perfect, there may often be the glad exclamation, 'This my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found?'"

"I have not thought of that before, Rowly; but I agree with you. I like to feel that it will be with Christians as it was with Israel; they shall go to Canaan with their old and with their young—with their sons and with their daughters—that there shall not be 'a hoof left behind.' More believing prayer will surely bring more abundant blessing."

"Ethie, I should like to have a word with old Colin to-night. Will you go with me?"

"I have to meet the servants in the housekeeper's room in half an hour, and it is nearly my last evening with them."

"Oh, then you can't go. Perhaps Hubert will."

Rowland met Hubert in the hall, and he seemed pleased to accompany his brother. They walked, however, rather silently. Each felt an almost unaccountable reserve. Hubert was conscious, that he had not peace with God—that he had never felt the Gospel of Christ, to be the glad tidings which Rowland had described; and though he longed to talk freely to his brother on the subject, yet he dreaded to appear as if he had more interest than he really felt. Rowland had an earnest wish to talk to Hubert concerning these things, but he doubted his own wisdom of utterance; he feared lest any word of his should prove a stumbling-block in his brother's way; and he had yet to learn the full meaning of the promise of inspiration, "Commit thy way unto the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass."

Old Colin had lately become bed-ridden; his eye was very dim, and his natural force was much abated. His intellect was, however, unimpaired, and the eye of faith still gazed steadily on the Canaan whither he was bound. He greatly enjoyed Rowland's visits, and had on that day been continually present in spirit with the youthful pastor.

"Well, sir," he said, holding firm his hand, "and have ye got on fine the day? The Lord has helped ye, has not He?"

"Yes, Colin; my weakness has, I trust, made manifest His strength."

"Ye know why that is, master; I take it, it's because He is God, and we are men."

"Then He does it for the glory of His own name."

"Ay, even so. And is He not good, to choose to show His glory in saving poor weak men? Might I be bold enow to ask the text, sir?"

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

"Not ashamed! The sailor manna be shamed of the compass. Shamed of the Gospel! Dears, dears no. And, thank God, the Lord Jesus not shamed o' us neither. That's the wonder, I take it, sir."

"Not ashamed to be called our God, for He hath prepared for us a city. He found us the poor outcast child, but he hath washed us with water and clothed us with fine linen, and put a beautiful crown on our head; and now He looketh on us and saith, 'Ye are perfect through my comeliness.'"

"I once read that, sir; where could it be?"

"It is in Ezekiel, Colin. Is it not so like what Paul says, 'Ye are complete in Him?'"

"Ay, sir, the glorious Gospel is all writ clear in both the Old and New Testament: it's the same sun, ye know, that paints the sky at three o'clock those bright mornings, and shines over our heads at noonday."

"And now that it is evening with you, Colin, the same sun sheds its golden light."

"Ay, master," said the old man, his eye brightening ; "and then, when the new day dawns, there'll be no night then."

He was silent for a little while, fixing his eye on Hubert, of whom he had not at first taken special notice.

"And is that ye, Master Hubert ? I'm right glad to see ye. And ye'd hear yer brother this morning ? Ye're not ashamed neither of the cross of the Lord Jesus ?"

"I'm not ashamed, Colin, but I am not fit to carry it."

"And surely auld Colin is not fit : but God has said, 'Bear it for me ;' and we manna say, 'Nay.' Ye're a good sailor, Mr. Hubert, and I'll engage to say, if the admiral bade you do something, ye would not stay to think, ye weren't strong enough."

Hubert knew how he had always sought the post of danger—how he had lately hazarded his life that he might chase the enemy—how the admiral had marked him out as the man that never flinched ; and old Colin's words made him feel that his humility was not genuine—that it was dislike to the struggle, rather than conscious unfitness, that made him unwilling to unfurl the banner of the Cross.

The brothers talked more unreservedly as they walked homewards, and as they parted, Hubert said,—“Rowly, I am a poor, good-for-nothing fellow. Ask God, sometimes, to give me a glimmer of the light old Colin sees, and it may help me yet to go upward, onward, on the way heavenwards.”

Rowland prayed, not sometimes, but oftentimes; he knew that a struggle was working in Hubert's soul, and he longed to see, that he was looking off the dizzy heights of earthly greatness to the mountain of the Lord's house, exalted high above the hills

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SIRE'S BIRTHDAY.

"Then kneeling down to heav'n's eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the grandsire prays:
Hope springs, exulting on triumphant wings,
That thus they all shall meet in future days,
There ever bask in uncreated rays.
No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear;
Together, hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere."

THERE was another of the Alleyne circle, whose opening character Ethelda watched with great interest. It was that of her only sister Gertrude. Religion was deepening in her heart, slowly, gradually. It did not find a soil for rapid growth, but yet it spread. It was casting out its fibres, and taking hold of the entire disposition. Gertrude was not aspiring,—quiet life was what she loved: in practical, present work, lay her interest. The characteristic of her religion was holding fast, rather than pressing forward—simple faith, rather than ardent aspirations. It was very difficult for her to grasp a new subject, or to enter into a fresh scheme,—but once embraced, it was yet more difficult to give it up. Her

heart opened slowly to understand the length, and breadth, and height, and depth of the love of Christ;—it seemed as if its limit of comprehension were narrow, but whatever it received was so digested that it became, one with herself, a part of her inner man.

The day before the bridal had been one of unusual excitement and preparation at Alleyne, and Gertrude had gone through the labour of directing much, with apparent little effort of feeling. A stranger would have thought that she was among the least concerned of the household. Shortly before the hour for evening prayer, Ethelda missed Gertrude from the family circle. It was a clear, bright, summer evening, heaven still reflecting the rays of sunlight which earth had lost. Ethie longed to be free from the constraint of drawing-room conversation, and was pleased to step unobserved upon the lawn, and wandering past the flower-beds, to pass under the branches of elm and chestnut-trees to an old arbour, not far from the high wall that surrounded the kitchen-garden. No one liked that arbour but Gerty; she had appropriated it when a child, had held her juvenile parties there, and now that she was older grown, used, during the few months of the year that it was not green with damp, to place a basket of flowers on its little table, and to sit with her book or work in its snugest corner. That night was cool and pleasant, and the table was covered with broken leaves and flowers, for Gertrude had been very busy arranging various bridal bouquets.

When Ethelda passed the woodbine screen, she saw her

sister resting her weary head upon that table. Gertrude looked up as Ethelda approached; her eyes were red with weeping. The sisters sat down together, and passed their arms round each other's waist.

"Gerty, darling, you are not breaking down?"

"Oh, no, Ethie. I never meant you to have found me out this way: but I somehow feel Alleyne will not be like itself when you are gone. You know, I never can be like you."

"God has not made us to be like one another in disposition, Gerty; and yet one may be as useful, as devoted to His service, as the other. Yonder oak, and ash, and elm, are all different, but each has its separate use and separate beauty."

"But I know, Ethie, people don't like me as they like you. I am not half so agreeable, nor half so good."

"I don't at all agree with you, little Gerty," said Ethelda, smiling; "but supposing the first part of your imagination were real, it does not prove that the latter is so. Don't you know, that our poor little oaks, so different from the south-country ones, have, after all, a much finer grain of wood? Slow growth is generally the surest. Depend upon it, God has given us each that disposition which, if rightly trained, will best accomplish an appointed mission. He has a variety of work and a variety of tools. He knows what kind He needs; sometimes it is the earnest, active temperament; sometimes the gentle, passive disposition; and at

other times the steady, persevering continuance in well-doing."

"Then I must be contented as I am. I never should have wished to be anything but quiet little Gerty, were it not that I know how sadly I shall supply your place."

"Love everybody, Gerty; think the best of every one; cultivate thoughtful love. And remember that, though natural disposition may remain until the end of life, it becomes sanctified in the Christian. The tree is the apple still, though the crab has been transformed into the best-flavoured fruit."

"Well, Ethie, I will try. My new sister will, I hope, help me a little. And then there will be both Percy and Rowland; for Rowly will be often over, even though he is determined to live in lodgings in his own district."

"And, Gerty, God will help you. No one ever tried, laying hold of the Father's hand, but He was ready to hold them up. We must pray for each other to-night."

Gertrude kissed her sister with warm affection, and soon they were again mingled with the bright circle in the drawing-room.

The bride adorned for the bridal was ready to leave her apartment, when, according to her wish, her beloved father came once more to kiss his child,—still, in one sense, his own possession.

She had spent the early hours of that morning in close communion with her God, and ere she joined the group be-

low, she longed to receive her father's blessing and poured-out prayer.

The old man trembled as he kissed his daughter. She looked more beautiful than he had ever seen her, and yet she had a calm and almost sorrowful air; and when she saw the tear roll down his aged cheek, her own eyes filled with those of sympathy, and it was with a strong effort that she repressed her emotion.

"God bless you, my precious daughter!" said the aged father. "May you make another's home happy as you have made your parent's. God bless my Ethelda, with all the blessings of His love. I have not words to pray. Rowly, kneel down with us, and ask the blessing of that Father who shall never die."

The breathing of the prayer was very earnest. It afresh cemented hearts with a closeness that no earthly separations could sever. It led thought forward from the ceremonies of earth to the marriage-supper of the Lamb—to the yet more abiding union in the kingdom of heaven.

Beside those sacred rails, where Ethie had so oft remembered her Lord in His death, with solemn vows and earnest supplications unto the King of Heaven, Claude Wentworth and Ethelda Alleyne became man and wife. The father's voice faltered as he gave away his daughter; but yet he was glad, for he knew it was to him whom she loved. Ethie was calm and composed until they met in the vestry; then, giving way to suppressed feeling, she laid her head on her father's shoulder and wept. Those tears were very pre-

cious: they solaced the old man's heart; God beheld them full of prayers for the father she so loved, and He treasured them in His bottle, to pour again in blessings on their heads.

A long, hearty hurrah burst from the crowd, as Ethelda, leaning on her husband's arm, entered again the carriage. The bells gave forth their merry chime; all the guns that the villagers could procure were fired; and from every cottage were hung flags of varied hue; and across the street were suspended wreaths of summer flowers. As they reached the top of the village, they saw on the links, over the shed that prayer had sanctified, a long, high pole, from the top of which a large banner was streaming. One of Ethie's most precious remembrances of that morning had been a nosegay of sweet, dwarf roses, left by little Ellen M'Gee, and around it, printed by Peter, were the words—"The Lord bless thee and keep thee."

A few weeks elapsed, and the birth-day of Mr. Alleyne dawned. The old man had entered his eightieth year. He expected to be surrounded by his children and grandchildren. Not one of them was missing.

Harry looked brighter that day than he had done ever since the wedding. He had sadly missed the guiding hand of his beloved aunt, but he had learnt to cling more closely to his God. He was also discovering, that in his father he had a friend, who could enter, like Aunt Ethie, into his peculiar joys and sorrows, who could understand the thoughts of his imaginative mind, and the feelings of his sensitive

heart. His mother was one who could not enter into the pursuits of a noisy, excitable boy of nine years old. She admired him, but she only sympathised with him, when she saw his gentle, tender play with the little Beatrice. Adah was still to remain at Harry's home, for she was very dear to old Mr. Alleyne. There was a gentle winningness in her way, a ready sympathy with his feelings, that knit his heart to her very closely.

The school-children were on that day to have tea upon the lawn, and Rowland had arranged that the tea should be followed by a missionary meeting. It was a holy, happy gathering. The old man presided; the golden setting sun cast, ere the meeting was closed, its ray upon his fine bare forehead, and seemed to light it, as an earnest of the yet brighter crown of glory that awaited him when the helmet of the battle should be laid aside, and he receive the conqueror's welcome. Beside him stood his three sons, and son-in-law, and good Mr. Graham; and near him were his daughters, and Adah, and the pretty, fair-haired Beatrice. Harry had found a seat beside a spreading beech, and there the little fellow stayed and listened. His large blue eyes were fixed on each speaker, and his heart seemed to speak through them, his earnest desire to buckle on his armour, and to fight in his strongholds, the great enemy of the Lord Jehovah.

It was after Uncle Rowland spoke that the gathering tear asserted the mastery, and Harry crept round the tree's giant trunk, and laid upon the ground and cried. Nor was

it the eye of Harry only that was full of tears. Rowland had given utterance to the feelings of a heart overflowing with the desire that all men should be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth. He had spoken with an earnestness, which carried power with its language. His clear, silvery voice, rang through the little assembly, and brought before them with living reality the curse of earth and the blessing of heaven. His appeal was strong for personal consecration of every soul before him to the service of their God and Saviour. "Little children," he urged, "the Lord hath need of you. Speak the gentle, loving word to those around you, and win them to the Saviour's service. You are Christ's enlisted soldiers, to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil. Jesus loves his infant bands; will not they give now an earnest that they are devoted to Him? Young men and young women, the Lord hath need of you—yes, this is the time of our opportunity. Now we can render Him the choicest service. There is not a day to be lost! The young man may be cut off in his youth, and would it not be a glorious thing to be crowned in the midst of the struggle with the conqueror's wreath,—to find, in a moment, that the sword is wrested from our hands, that we may grasp the banner of victory? And old friends, dear old friends, life's longest days are but a moment compared to the length of eternity—but a moment of opportunity that can never be recalled—a point, whence the radii of a circle that knows no circumference go forth—the kernel, where the tree lives that shall never wither. The hours

that yet remain must be few for you. Let them be given to Christ—let them be spent as in the judgment-day you would wish they had been passed. Whilst life lasts, do what you can to spread salvation. In heaven, the opportunity you have now, shall have passed away.”

Hubert listened to Rowland’s appeal, and on his knees, that night, he besought the Lord that he might henceforward follow Jesus,—that he might no longer lose opportunity, but press onward, not ashamed to carry the banner of the Cross of Christ. Thus another brother was seeking strength that he might look upward, and go onward,—that he also might “press toward the mark for the prize of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Time is shortening—eternity is nearing! Reader, art thou still dwelling in the vale, or treading only the mounts of earth? Nay, art not thou rather ascending the hill of Zion? Henceforward shall it not be thy greatest joy to raise thy eye upward, and behold the Friend of sinners watching thee,—to quicken thy steps onward,—ever approaching the new Jerusalem, the city of the living God?

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE SUMMIT GAINED.

"The world recedes—it disappears;
Heaven opens on my eyes; my ears
With sounds seraphic ring.
Lend, lend your wings—I mount! I fly!
O Grave, where is thy victory?
O Death, where is thy sting?"—POPE.

At breakfast-time the following morning, Salmon, the butler, came into the room, and with rather a serious face, addressing Rowland, said,—

"Please, sir, Peter M'Gee is wishing to see you, and he is in a great haste."

"I'll be with him immediately;" and, breaking off an interesting conversation with Sir Claude, Rowland hurried into his study.

Peter's message was soon delivered. Fever had broken out at the huts, and his father and "sister Elleen" were laid down very ill.

"Oh, sir," said Peter, "that sister there is a regular darlinth. I know not what I should do if the Lord should take her!"

"You would look more brightly up, my lad. Year by year heaven is filling with those we love on earth. But I trust she may yet recover, Peter. Has she been long ill?"

"These few days, sir. The doctor says her strength is well-nigh gone."

"Has the doctor not spoken about port wine?"

"Yes, your reverence, but I did not like to tell you of that. I knew, if it were good, you would think of it yersel."

"I will come down as quickly as I can, and bring a bottle with me. For one minute, Peter, we will kneel in prayer."

Short and earnest was that petition, but it was to Peter more than any earthly cordial. It was sipping a draught of heaven's life-giving stream, and in its strength he went forth refreshed.

Rowland mounted Jeanette, and reached the huts before Peter arrived. The "huts" still retained their old name, but they were now a row of neat wooden cottages, each family possessing two rooms.

The strong man was indeed laid low. Patrick M'Gee was unable to raise his head, and the little Elleen looked as if life were ebbing fast. The wine seemed to refresh the father, and he cast his eye gratefully on the youthful Rowland. "God's best blessings rest on yer reverence. Ye've given me better than yonder wine—ye've pointed me out the Lord Jesus, both wine and meat for the hungry soul."

"And He is all-sufficient now; is He not, Patrick?"

"Yes, that He is; He makes me willing to live or to die, according to His most blessed will."

"If you live, you trust to live to Him; and if you die, to live with Him. Is that your hope?"

"Ay, sure it is! a wondrous hope for a poor sinner like me. But, ye see, it's given me. I never might have bought it."

"And it is a hope that shall never grow dim. It will only be lost when we are made like unto the Son of God, seeing Him as He is."

"Ay," said Patrick, and his eye brightened with his old cheerful look; "it may well be lost there: just as we lose the appetite when we finish the full meal, or just as we furl the sails when we have entered the port."

It was not wise to allow poor Pat to talk more. Rowland read a few verses of trust in the living God, from the Psalms, and commended the father and the child to Him who could lay low and raise up, who could wound and who could heal.

Before he left he looked towards the little Ellen's bed. Poor child! the delirium of fever was upon her. Her cheek was flushed, and her eye was wild.

"Oh, I see, I see," she said, "to the other side of the wide, wide sea! Oh, mother, it's such a land! the sands are gold, bright gold! Peter, mavourneen, take me across! Don't stop here! I want, I want to go. Oh, mother, it's such a land! they tell me to come to them! There's the

Lord Jesus, the blessed Lord! He has such a crown! He is bidding me come, mother! mother dear! let me go!"

And then the poor little one put out her hands, as if she expected to be borne across those dark waters; and then she cried out yet again, "Mother! mother dear! let me go."

It was but a few hours, and the emancipated spirit was carried by angels to the land beyond the flood; and whilst Peter wept for his darling Elleen, he felt assured that the Saviour, whom he loved, would in His own good time, bear him thither also. Peter had lost his little companion on earth, but he beheld her beckoning him onwards to the home which she had reached.

During the week Rowland daily visited the huts, for fever had spread through several of the cottages.

"Rowly," said Hubert, on the following Monday morning, "You look regularly worn out, and I wish I could go to those huts instead of you. And then you mean to begin your life in lodgings to-night. I'm sure you'll knock yourself up."

"Oh no, Hubert; flesh and blood are not very brittle."

"At any rate, Rowly, I wish you would give me something to do. I am only a bird of passage, it is true, but perhaps I might drop one grain of seed."

A beautiful brightness lighted up the eye of Rowland, which on that morning had looked very heavy. "Would you, Hubert?" he exclaimed. "Birds of passage may be most useful. Here a seed and there a seed. I have a bad

headache to-day, and I was not going to the huts, as I went yesterday after service; but I wanted to ride over to Newtown, where I heard of a young man very ill of consumption."

"Then let me go instead of you, like a good fellow, I will talk to him as well as ever I can."

Rowland thankfully accepted Hubert's offer, and as the young sailor cantered off, the brother's knees were bent in prayer, thanking God for the effort Hubert was making, and supplicating an abundant blessing in the Redeemer's name. His headache increased, and he tried a stroll under the trees; but on that day the light seemed too strong for him, and his limbs were weary as he had never felt them before. He was cold when every one else complained of heat, and languid when all around seemed full of energy.

Hubert found Rowland lying upon a sofa in his study—the same room that had once been Ethie's snuggerly.

"Well, my old boy, I fear you haven't improved with your morning's rest."

"I don't think I have, Hubert; my head still aches much. But sit down here and tell me about the poor lad."

"He is very ill, poor fellow! Just like a sailor lad I once knew. I doubt his ever recovering, but I promised I would go again and see him."

"And did he like to be talked to?"

"Well, you see, Rowly, I don't know if I have the right way. I never tried that sort of thing before; but when poor

John Mason was so ill, I remembered that he liked best for me to read one of the Gospel narratives; so I read to this poor fellow the one that was John's favourite."

"Which was that, Hubert?"

"The parable of the prodigal son. I believe the truth is, it's my favourite, too. There's something there that has always gone right through my heart. It is; that the father never utters one word of reproach—never, by a look even, upbraids the prodigal. It is so unlike the common way with man, that it can only be a relation of Him, 'whose ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts.' So I sought it out and read it to young Thompson. Poor fellow! I thought he did not look pleased when I opened the Bible, but when I had finished he said, 'What do you take that to mean, sir?' I told him the best way I could, how God willeth not the death of a sinner, but says, 'Come and live.' The tears rose in the poor fellow's eyes, and he said, 'Would you ask God to make me live? I have never dared to speak to Him, and I could not bear to hear of Him, for mother has been always telling me, God hated the wicked, and until I was quite different, it was of no use my going to Him. I've been wicked enough, sir; but so was this son, and you see the Father loved him, and kissed him, without asking,— 'Are you quite a different man?' It was but with weak words, Rowland, but we both knelt down, and I prayed that Jesus would receive us both, and for His own name's sake would welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve."

Rowland's eyes were full of tears. He pressed his

brother's hand,—“Thank God, my dearest Hubert! you have found Jesus, and He will not let you go. He has answered prayer for the glory of His great name.”

Hubert replied with a very broken voice,—“I know that you and Ethie have been often praying for me. I cannot thank you half enough. Go on, and you'll get yet more blessings for a foolish fellow like me. But, Rowly, what is the matter? I am sure you are ill. Why do you shake so?”

Rowland was very ill. The fever had attacked him, and his couch shook with the nervous shivering, which is so often the prelude of its advance.

Rowland had never been robust, and hard work at college, succeeded by parish labours yet more fatiguing, had not prepared him to meet the ruthless disease by which he was now attacked. His body was at once prostrated, but his mind was kept from wavering, and his soul rested in perfect peace.

Early the following morning, Percy rode over to Laverock Priory, and brought back Rowland's beloved sister, Ethelda. At the sound of her voice he opened his heavy eyes, and a childlike look of pleasure lit up his features. As the day wore away, the medical men grew more anxious, for the fever ran extremely high.

The night-light was burning, and all were gone to rest, excepting Ethelda and Hubert. The sufferer had had a short, restless, starting sleep. Again he opened his eyes, and gently said,—“Ethie, darling sister!”

She stooped down and kissed his burning brow.

"Ethie, the mountain-tops are seen, bright and glorious, right afore me; and Jesus is leading our Hubert on, and He will *never* let him go."

"But, Rowly," replied his sister, as her tears fell upon his forehead, "we trust God is not now going to bid you leave us,—that the united little band of brothers and sisters shall not so soon be broken?"

"I think I see the glory. You would not wish to keep me? We shall all meet. '*Every one* shall appear before God in Zion.'"

Rowland hardly spoke again that night, and during the next day the symptoms were regarded as extremely unfavourable. A slight delirium occasionally manifested itself; but even then, visions of unutterable joy appeared to pass before him.

Two more days of great suffering and much delirium were endured. It was evening; the summer sun was setting, and pouring its rich and mellow light through the openings of the venetian blinds. Ethie had laid down to rest, before she commenced another night's watching. Hubert alone sat by the bed, fanning tenderly and unweariedly his beloved brother. Rowland opened his eyes and rested them on Hubert.

"Is it you, Hubert? I can hardly see."

"Yes, Rowly. Do you like this?"

"Very much, my kind brother. Hubert, I am dying, or rather mounting up—up to glory."

"And leaving poor Hubert in the valley?"

"No, no, thank God; on the mountain-side, following after—pressing on. Ever look up, Hubert. Jesus will help you; glory is before you. It's worth the climbing."

"Oh, Rowly, pray for me."

"Pray and praise whilst life shall last: God will never leave you nor forsake you. He shall guide you with His counsel, and then receive you into glory—glory—glory—bright glory. Is that father?"

Old Mr. Alleyne had entered the room and stood beside his son.

"Father, I shall soon welcome you into glory. Your youngest boy will be the first-born into glory. Oh, father, praise God for me."

The old man could scarce reply; but he looked at Rowly, and then raised his eye to heaven, and whispered, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth."

Rowland's voice was much changed. His hands and feet were chilled with death's cold touch, and it was evident that those around could not much longer retain on earth the son and brother, whom they so loved.

"Where is Ethie?" inquired Rowland, having more than once looked round the room. "Is she here?"

"No, Rowly: you would like her to come?" and Hubert, without waiting for a reply, gently left the room.

Ethelda was roused from her light sleep in a moment, and soon stood beside her dying brother's bed. He did not at first notice her.

"My precious Rowly!" the fond sister uttered.

"Ethie, my Ethie, I wished to see you. I feel you now, but I cannot see plain. Ethie, I am dying. My God is my guide even unto death."

"And we would not detain you, darling," said the weeping sister; "but we had thought that you were long to minister amongst us."

"Jesus calls me to serve above: I am waiting—waiting. It's glory there. Pray, Ethie, for the everlasting arms."

Mr. Alleyne, and Hubert and Ethelda, knelt down and prayed amidst fast-flowing tears: they prayed for glory for their Rowland, and for grace for themselves.

For nearly an hour Rowland lay almost unconscious. Once more he opened those eyes that were so lately dimmed. A beautiful light beamed there—a radiance was shed across his face. His lips moved, "Come, Lord Jesus, come!" and Jesus came, and bore the emancipated spirit to rest upon His bosom.

The mountain-clamberer's ascent was over—the height was gained, the goal was won. His footsteps no longer rested on God's hill of earth, but had reached the heavenly Zion, the city of the great King. Compassed with infirmities, and assailed by difficulties, he had climbed the mount of his pilgrimage, and had found the guiding rod and the helping staff comfort him.

Now he lingered no longer—nothing earthly bore him back; the everlasting arms supported him—the wings of love conveyed him—the whispers, "Higher, higher," en-

couraged him onward—and the mansion in the Father's house received him. His work on earth was done, his place in heaven was prepared. The staff was laid aside, the palm of victory was waved. More than conqueror, through Christ that loved him, he rests in conscious peace; and on the morn of the resurrection shall awaken to clamber the glorious heights of the land of promise—a progress which shall know no fatigue, which shall ever reveal wider views of the greatness and goodness of “the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity.”

THE END.



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